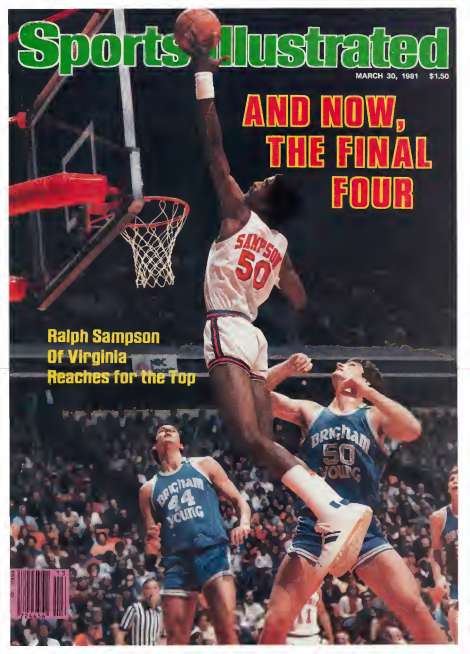


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Women order as follows: Size 8(XS), 10(S), 12(M),
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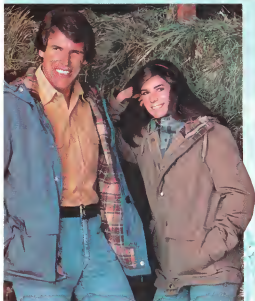
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LETTER FROM THE PUBLISHER



KEITH AND FAMILY: BACK ON THE ROAD, BUT BRIEFLY

With the NCAA playoffs and spring training both upon us, editing either college basketball or major league baseball for SI would appear to be a full-time assignment, but Senior Editor Larry Keith, whose job it was to coordinate this week's 12 pages of text on Johnny Bench and the NCAA regionals, has been going around the office looking pretty much as you see him above.

Of course, wearing two hats is nothing new for Keith. From 1975, when he became the youngest writer then on our staff, to May 1 of last year, when he became the youngest of our senior editors, Keith, now 33, regularly wrote about both college hoops and baseball, his byline appearing as many as 35 times a year. The change to editing has involved him in different responsibilities but has proved no less a commitment.

"A writer is like an independent contractor," he says. "You know the subject inside out and write the story but have little to do with it after it gets to the office. An editor, on the other hand, may not be as close to the subject but handles the story every other step of the way."

Keith was reminded of the difference recently when he and the family visited Florida to hit the spring training camps, see the South Florida-Connecticut NIT game and have dinner at the

home of South Florida Basketball Coach Lee Rose in Tampa. At the Roses, Larry and his wife, Carolyn, a former SI picture editor, sampled the old—and sometimes more glamorous—life of the roving writer as they feasted on fresh shrimp, stone crabs and strawberry daiquiris. Nonetheless, his dedication to editing remained unshaken.

"I had to adjust to less travel and being desk-bound," Keith says, "but I found that there were

more than adequate compensations. I've been able to lead a more orderly life with Carolyn and our sons Robby [3½] and Teddy [1½], and I've discovered that editing offers its own creative challenges. Deciding what's to be covered, for example, and when and where it will run in the magazine. Johnny Bench and the regionals were obvious choices, but you're also obliged to come up with more original story ideas."

Keith's favorites among his ideas so far have been the hand-shaking piece Curry Kirkpatrick wrote, to rave reviews, in the Feb. 16 issue, the introduction of our weekly basketball Top 20 and the notion of putting Ralph Sampson, Mark Aguirre and Albert King on the cover of the college basketball issue dressed as a Revolutionary life-and-drum corps.

Says Keith, "I have found that the best thing about editing is its total involvement in the publishing process: helping to choose pictures and layouts, assigning stories, discussing ideas, planning special issues. As a writer, I didn't fully appreciate how much goes into putting out the magazine. Now I do."

Philip D. Harbert

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was pretty poor, we mostly
played with a lot of heart and
practically no equipment.*



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Father Feeney kept the team going on donations. Since the area was pretty poor, we mostly played with a lot of heart and practically no equipment. For instance, each player was supposed to furnish his own football shoes. Turned out I was the only guy on the team who couldn't afford any. So Moose Wozniak good-naturedly allowed me to share his. Moose's shoes weren't any too swanky to start with, being hand-me-downs from his big brother, but they served the purpose.

Moose'd come hobbling off the field and unlace. I'd slip into his shoes and dash back out. Only problem was Moose wore a size 12. I wore size 9. So I had to stuff the toes with paper. Then I'd spend all my time on the field with my toes butted up against wadded newspapers. All

my life I remembered that sensation.

And all my life I remembered the team. And the man who taught me the game, and that life has its goals, too. When I got my first job, he was the one who advised me to join the Payroll Savings Plan. And those U.S. Savings Bonds been growing ever since.

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Sports Illustrated

IN A LEAGUE BY ITSELF

WE COVER YOUR FAVORITE SPORT..

BOOKTALK

by JONATHAN YARDLEY

AN ENGAGING ACCOUNT OF BASEBALL BACK IN THE GOOD OLD (VERY OLD) DAYS

On August 3, 1908, the *New York Tribune* surveyed the baseball scene and found it wondrous to behold:

"Not in years has the National League had such a contest as is being waged at present. In the last two years the Cubs clinched their hold on the pennant by August 1, and it was

merely a matter of speculation just how many games they would be in advance of other teams at the end of the season. The story is altogether different this season. The Pirates, Cubs and Giants are very evenly matched, and it is impossible to say which team will finish in front."

The best, in point of fact, was yet to come. The 1908 race was not decided until the final out of the final game, played by the Cubs and Giants before a frenzied crowd at the Polo Grounds—a game made necessary because, on Sept. 23, Fred Merkle of the Giants had failed to touch second base.

Poor Merkle. He was in the second season of what would be a 16-year career, and a far from undistinguished one. But the infamous "boner" of Sept. 23 haunted him for life.

That boner emerges now from the mists of baseball history as the climactic event in G. H. Fleming's *The Unforgettable Season* (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, \$16.95), an ingenious and entertaining account of what the dust jacket bills as "the most exciting and calamitous pennant race of all time." Those with memories of the 1951 race in the National League, or the 1978 race in the American League East, may beg to differ—but the drama of that 1908 brobaha is difficult to top.

Fleming, who teaches English literature at the University of New Orleans, has chosen to tell the story of that race entirely in the words of the reporters who covered it for metropolitan newspapers, chiefly in Chicago, Pittsburgh and New York. There is a New York bias that will irritate some readers—



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after all, the Cubs won the pennant—but it's true that the Giants were the Cinderella team and that their cast of characters was something special.

These were the Giants of Christy Mathewson, Roger Bresnahan, Iron Man McGinnity, Turkey Mike Donlin—and John J. McGraw. They were a two-fisted bunch. One newspaper declared: "The spirit of rowdiness with which McGraw has imbued the Giants bids fair to live as long as do the men whom he taught to bulldoze umpires and behave like Bowery roughs, on and off the diamond. For several years the New York club has done more to lower the position of professional ball players than all other major league teams put together."

That was sanctimonious malarkey. The des-

potes quoted in this book make clear that all of baseball in 1908 was only a step away from the frontier. Brawls on the field were common, even more frequent were brawls in the stands, meles frequently incited by the on-premises consumption of hard liquor. The power of league authorities to control the behavior of players and fans was tenuous and subject to constant challenge.

Indeed, the Merkle case subjected that power to a severe test. Every fan knows that when Merkle failed to touch second, the winning run was nullified and the crucial game declared a tie. What has been forgotten is that the incident set off a furious bout of legal maneuvering by both the Cubs and the Giants, with each team determined to force League President Harry Pulliam to bow to

its own interpretation of the affair. He stood firm, but with immense difficulty.

The *Unforgettable Season* brings all this tumult and shouting vividly to life through the words of those who were there. The reporters of the day were unabashed homers; the home team was usually "we" and its cause was loudly trumpeted. The writers' prose ranged from the bombastic to the sentimental, but it was almost always florid.

What Fleming has assembled is an engaging and revealing period piece. He has produced a book that brings back to life a distant time and that provides, as Lawrence Ritter notes in his forward, "a jarring glimpse of an America that was not quite as tranquil and serene as nostalgia would generally have us believe."

END



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SCORECARD

Edited by ROBERT H. BOYLE

SELLING THE FARM?

New Hampshire is a unique state. It's the only one in the U.S. with no income tax and no sales tax. It also has the largest state legislature in the country, with 424 members who receive a \$200 biennial salary and mileage expenses. Enter into this frugal environment Delaware North Companies, Inc. (DNC) of Buffalo, N.Y., owned by Max, Jeremy and Lawrence Jacobs. Delaware North is descended from the Emprise Corp. (SI, May 29, 1972), which was convicted in 1972 of conspiracy and interstate transportation to aid racketeering.

After Rockingham Park in Salem, N.H., burned down last July, Governor Hugh Gallen wondered aloud if the horse track couldn't be rebuilt with state-approved low-interest revenue bonds, legally available only to industrial concerns. DNC, which owns Boston Garden and the Boston Bruins, grabbed at the suggestion. To the dismay of Boston fans, DNC proposed to abandon the Garden and move the Bruins to Salem, where the company would rebuild the horse track, and construct a dog track and an arena for the hockey team. Although Salem had voted down dog racing referenda three times in the last 10 years, DNC said that if it didn't get the dog track the whole deal was off. So a fortnight ago the Salem citizenry approved greyhound racing with the condition that the arena had to be under construction before the dogs could run.

But the matter isn't as simple as that. Besides seeking the \$40 million in revenue bonds to build the complex, DNC wants a \$125 million tax break from the state. Thus, the company has asked that it be allowed to keep the first \$5 million of pari-mutuel taxes for each of the next 25 years, a measure that it didn't raise with Governor Gallen in initial talks. The legislature would have to approve any such tax break, and Dayton Duncan, chief of staff to the governor, says, "The legislature is dealing with this with some skepticism. We'd like the Bruins, but

we're not willing to sell the farm for them."

There's also the question of where the NHL stands. Senator Paul Tsongas of Massachusetts, who has been trying to keep the Bruins in Boston, says he spoke to Commissioner John Ziegler, "and asked if it upset anybody that the Bruins were being dangled as a bauble for dog racing. Ziegler said, 'Well, that's not what the Jacobses told us they're doing, and we're obligated to believe them.' Not one of the other owners in hockey has spoken out—the NHL seems to be a very closed group. I was frankly astounded by the utter lack of embarrassment about what was going on."

SCHRAMM'S SGAM

Imagine the AFC championship game between the Cleveland Browns and the Buffalo Bills being played at Legion Field in Birmingham. Or an NFC championship game between Minnesota and Philadelphia being held at Sun Devil Stadium in Tempe. Or perhaps at Aloha Stadium in Honolulu. Or the Gator Bowl in Jacksonville.

Don't laugh. If Tex Schramm, the president of the Cowboys, has his way, that's what will happen to the NFL conference championship games. At the league meeting on Maui last week, Schramm, the chairman of the NFL competition committee, the group that proposes new rules, suggested that the NFC and AFC finals be shifted to non-NFL, warm-weather sites. Said Schramm, "Our fans would rather see our teams play under good conditions, even if it means losing their chance to see a championship game at home." Had Schramm taken a survey? No, he hadn't, but last December he proposed Pontiac's Silverdome as a possible site if either Minnesota or Buffalo became the home team and had an unplayable field. Pete Rozelle went so far as to check on the Silverdome but learned it was unavailable because of a boat show.

Schramm's idea, which was backed by

fellow committee members Don Shula of the Dolphins and Eddie LeBaron of the Falcons, will be studied and brought up again at the league's June meeting in Detroit. By no means is everyone for it. General Manager Jim Murray of the Eagles says, "I called our owner, Leonard Tose, to tell him about it, and I had to hold the phone at arm's length because he was yelling so loud. Our fans would come after us with tire irons."

OUT OF THE MOOD

This Saturday Hialeah holds its most famous race, the Flamingo Stakes, named after the colony of flamingos that resides on a small island in the track's infield. While horseplayers are getting ready for action, the same cannot be said of the birds. Imported to Hialeah from Cuba in the 1920s, the flamingos multiplied,



reaching a peak population of more than 600 a decade ago. But no flamingos have been born since 1972, and male and female birds have lately shown virtually no interest in each other. As a result, the flock has dwindled to barely 400, prompting Angelo Testa, Hialeah's director of operations and resident birdman, to say, "I'm very much concerned. The flamingos are synonymous with Hialeah, and since you can't barter or trade for more birds under the endangered-species laws, we could lose them."

Testa thinks he knows what disrupted the flamingos' breeding habits. By tradition, Hialeah's winter meeting ran from January to early March, ending just in time for the flamingos' four-week mating season. But in 1972, the Florida Supreme Court ruled that Hialeah had to swap dates with Gulfstream, with the result that every other year Hialeah's meeting now runs from March through May.

continued

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INFLATION. TOGETHER, WE CAN SELF-CONTROL IT.

Pity the poor flamingos. Suddenly their Mareb mating season was being intruded upon by hundreds of galloping horses and thousands of screaming fans, a distraction that apparently put them very much out of the mood.

Testa has tried everything. He has mined the flamingos' island with artificial eggs, hoping they would get the message. He has constructed clay replicas of the cone-shaped mounds of earth that flamingos use as nests. On the advice of curators of the Indianapolis and St. Louis zoos, where flamingos were found to be more amorous after warm drizzles, he set up a sprinkler system and showered the island. After the artificial rain subsided, the males strutted, honked and raised their wings in a mating dance and constructed nests. Alas, not an egg was laid. Testa vows to struggle on, but he's not optimistic, warning that unless the racing commission restores Hialeah's traditional dates, the result for the flamingos could be "a complete disaster."

FISHY CLUE

Maryland fishermen and biologists are disturbed by the dramatic decline of fish in Chesapeake Bay, the most productive estuary in the world. Individual fish populations have their ups and downs, but four different species that spawn in Maryland waters—striped bass, yellow perch, river herring and shad—have all slumped in numbers in recent years. For example, the shad catch plummeted from one million pounds in 1972 to 47,000 pounds in 1979 before the state imposed a fishing ban last year that's still in effect. More ominously, biologists who regularly make beach seine surveys in the summer to determine the success of the previous spring's spawning netted only 28 juvenile shad in the last two years. Previously they had caught hundreds each season. Various suggestions have been made to explain the declines, such as contamination by chemicals or heavy metals, but now Dr. Joseph Mihursky, professor of ecology at the University of Maryland's Chesapeake Biological Laboratory, thinks he may have a clue, at least as far as striped bass in the Potomac River are concerned. This species is of particular concern because its numbers have dropped elsewhere on the East Coast and in California in recent years.

According to Mihursky, who headed a team of researchers, the key to having a super crop of baby striped bass—what

biologists call a "dominant year-class"—has nothing at all to do with the number of adults that spawn. Instead, a dominant year-class of baby bass results if an abundance of food is available when the infant fish first begin to feed on their own. The food they eat are microscopic organisms called zooplankton that in turn devour detritus. Thus the abundance of zooplankton depends on the amount of dead leaf and grass litter that washes into the Potomac from adjacent lands and marshes.

By correlating beach seine and weather records for 25 years, Mihursky calculates that the success of a striped bass year-class in the Potomac is dependent on below-average winter temperatures starting in December and an above-average runoff for a five-day period the following April. "If there is cold weather starting in December, the leaf and grass litter doesn't rot out, but is frozen in place," he explains. "Then the scour in April washes it into the river. This allows the zooplankton population to start building, and they in turn become food for the larval bass at the right time. We haven't had those two weather conditions in the Potomac since 1970, and that's when we had our last big year-class."

Mihursky adds, "If we have those two weather conditions, and we still don't get a big year-class, then we should focus on contaminants."

STEAMED UP

P.A. announcer Kevin Slaten of the St. Louis Steamers of the Major Indoor Soccer League is known for his flamboyant delivery and for being a "bomber." Slaten exuberantly pours it on as he introduces the Steamer players, each of whom dramatically emerges from a heavy cloud of vapor as his name is called, and when a Steamer scores, Slaten gets so carried away—and the fans with him—that the referee has to wait for the crowd to quiet down before allowing play to resume.

Last week Slaten outdid himself during a playoff game against the Buffalo Stallions and became, as far as is known, the first P.A. announcer in any sport to get thrown out of a game. Referee Heins Wohlmuth, who cautioned Slaten before the game to be impartial, ejected him "for violent contact with a player and for using foul and abusive language." The incident occurred before the half

when Slaten tried to punch John Dolinsky of Buffalo, who had been sent to the penalty box. "He kept taunting me, wanting me to lose my cool," Dolinsky says. "He wanted me to fight, but I just laughed at him and he couldn't handle that."

Besides getting bounced out of the game, Slaten got bounced from his job on the orders of Earl Foreman, the league commissioner who also fined the Steamers. The president of the Steamers, Stan Musial, said, "Although I wasn't at the game, I abhor any violence connected with sports. I in no way condone the action by Mr. Slaten and certainly understand the position of the commissioner in this matter and agree with him."

NHL commissioner and owners please take note.

SCALPED

TICKETS FOR SALE: 1991 NCAA Football, March 24-25, in Philadelphia. 8-choice tickets for March 24 & March 25th games. Will sell in lots of 4 or 8 only. Call Dick Berman, 312-426-1231.

This classified ad ran in Baton Rouge last week, and sportswriter Sam King of the State-Times called the number and spoke to Remien. He wanted \$2,400 for eight tickets or \$1,200 for four, \$266 per ticket more than their \$34 face value. "I know they're expensive," Remien explained, "but let me tell you that we're not in the ticket brokerage business. We've got a manufacturing company in Evansville, Ind. and have a lot of Chicago customers that would like to have watched DePaul play in the final four. We also have some friends in the Lexington area that were sure Kentucky would be in the finals, so we went out of the way and bought these tickets for them at exactly the price we're trying to sell them."

By last weekend, Remien had lowered the price to \$2,000 for eight tickets and \$1,000 for four, but he still didn't have a buyer. He wasn't having very much luck, either. The day before another of his ads was to run in the Provo, Utah, *Daily Herald*, BYU got best.

THEY SAID IT

● Billy Martin, skipper of the Oakland A's: "I believe if God had ever managed, He would have been very aggressive, the way I manage."

● Glenn Abbott, Seattle pitcher, on the Mariners' acquisition of sluggers Richie Zisk and Jeff Burroughs: "We lost a lot of games last year 3-2 and 4-3. Now we'll have a chance to lose 9-8." **END**

Marlboro Country



Warning: The Surgeon General Has Determined
That Cigarette Smoking Is Dangerous to Your Health.

Lights: 14 mg. "tar," 0.9 mg. nicotine av. per cigarette. Kings: 15 mg. "tar,"
1.1 mg. nicotine av. per cigarette. FTC Report Dec. '79

STEP ASIDE, I'M OFF TO PHILLY

Class came through in the NCAA regionals as high-ranked North Carolina, Virginia, Louisiana State and Indiana blew the opposition out. Next stop, the Spectrum, where they'll form the most formidable final four in years **by BRUCE NEWMAN**

Now that there is no longer any doubt about who has the best front line in college basketball (North Carolina does), or about which team was the class of last week's West Regional (North Carolina wins), the only question that remains unanswered is this: If God really is a Tar Heel, why does His team keep turning Carolina blue in the face every time it reaches the final four? Not even Coach Dean Smith, who is 6-0 in regional finals and 0-5 in final four competition, knows the answer. "Let's not talk about that," he says.

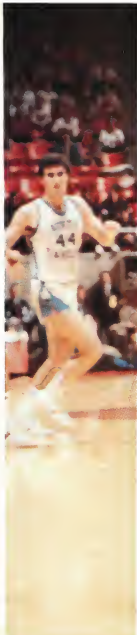
Smith is in his 20th year at North Carolina, and this season, in some ways, may have produced his finest coaching performance ever. Certainly the Tar Heels are loaded with talent, but when Carolina began practicing in October, starting Forward James Worthy was limping around with a metal pin in his right leg, starting Point Guard Jimmy Black was recovering from a cracked vertebra suffered in an automobile accident, starting center Pete Budko had a stress fracture

in his left tibia, and Budko's replacement, 6' 9" Sam Perkins, was an untried freshman. Last Tuesday, when the Tar Heels rolled over Utah 61-56 on the Utes' home floor in Salt Lake City, Worthy had 15 points, 10 rebounds, six assists and two blocked shots. Perkins, who supplanted Budko in the pivot at midseason, was equally devastating inside, scoring 31 points, grabbing 22 rebounds and blocking five shots in the victory over Utah on Thursday and in Saturday's 82-68 regional championship defeat of Kansas State.

"At the beginning of the season we didn't even know if Worthy was going to be able to play with that pin in his leg," said Smith. "And we had no idea Sam would come on as fast as he has." Perkins, whose soft hands make him the perfect hub of the Tar Heels' splendid interior passing game, is the team's second-

continued

Point Guard Jimmy Black wheeled by Scott Marlin of Utah as the Tar Heels beat the Utes 61-56





leading scorer (15.1) and rebounder (7.8). And Perkins may be the only player left in the tournament capable of neutralizing Ralph Sampson of Virginia, Carolina's semifinal opponent Saturday in Philadelphia. "Sam ain't no freshman," says UNC Forward Al Wood. "That youngster is like ice. We say, 'Go out and play, Sam,' and he do." And when Perkins do, the Tar Heels do, too.

Before the Utah game, Smith was concerned about overcoming the Utes' home-court advantage and about playing at Salt Lake City's 4,327-foot altitude. "It would help if Utah would shoot 10%," Smith said. He was only kidding, but the Utes tried to oblige, hitting just 39.7% of their shots. Utah Forward Karl Bankowski, who had been his team's outside scoring threat all season, shot 1 for 9 even though the Heels seemed to be giving him as much room as he wanted. "I've never seen him have a game like that," said Utah's star forward, Danny Vranes. "If he sticks the jumper, it opens it up for us inside."

With Carolina free to camp in the lane, Vranes, Bankowski and Center Tom Chambers spent a frustrating evening trying to live up to their billing as the best front line in America. Vranes, a formidable leaper, had two of his first three shots sent back courtesy of Perkins and Worthy, and Chambers spent most of the game in foul trouble. North Carolina whipped up on Utah so fiercely inside that during the second half the Tar Heels took but one shot from more than 10 feet from the basket, and Wood hit it.

Kansas State earned its chance at North Carolina by defeating Illinois 57-52 on Thursday, largely on the strength of late free throws by Eduardo Galvao and Tim Jankovich and a 12-point, 14-rebound effort by 6' 7" Center Ed Nealy. Nealy is listed at 235 pounds, and as somebody suggested last week, he has a body that looks as if it should be up on blocks. "It doesn't bother me that people laugh at me," Nealy said. "Other teams look at us and they don't take us seriously because we don't look like much. By the time they realize we mean business, it's too late."

K-State Coach Jack Hartman may have grown weary of hearing his upstart team described as a dozen different kinds of ugly, but even he had to admit that "as basketball players go, they don't exactly turn your head as they go by." The Wildcats' only name player was 6' 6"

Olympian Rolando Blackman, and he split the backcourt duties with Jankovich and Galvao. Jankovich, who dates Hartman's daughter, lost his starting spot earlier in the tournament because he's so short (6 feet) and then got it back again 15 minutes before the Illinois game because Hartman "liked the set of his jaw." Galvao came to the Wildcats from Brazil. "Is terrible, the winter in Kansas," he says. "I almost die last year." Nealy drove the team van to and from games. "The beer drinkers and the blue-collar people of the world would like our team," said Hartman on the eve of K-State's meeting with the toast of the championship set, the Carolina Tar Heels.

The Wildcats quickly fell behind in the first half, and although it was Wood, Worthy and Perkins who did most of the damage, freshman Matt Doherty came

off the bench and made two steals that led to breakaway layups. "Psychologically, those are the kind of plays that knock the wind out of you," said Wood.

With Worthy and Perkins sucking K-State's zone defense into the middle, Wood was free to roam the perimeter. He finished with 21 points and 17 rebounds and was named the tournament's outstanding player. Wood is something very special, and even though it had been one of his best days, he knew where the game had been won. "When we get the ball inside," he said, "we're going to be all right. Big Sam knows what to do with it when he gets it in there."

Now if the Tar Heels can just avoid getting Virginia's Sampson stuck in their windpipe, it may be their turn to make the other teams in Philadelphia turn Carolina blue.

Wood, the West MVP, had 15 points and six rebounds against Utah and 21 and 17 against K-State.



YES, VIRGINIA, THERE IS A FINAL FOUR

by Frank Deford

The Eastern was clearly the class regional. The four teams were all from the Top 20, they had the fewest losses among them, and the most celebrities. Notre Dame has been on network television so often that Coach Digger Phelps is becoming "The Green Shadow." Virginia offered up the basketball writers' Player of the Year, Ralph Sampson, while Brigham Young countered with the wrathlike Danny Ainge, in his valedictory season of playing for free. Tennessee was no match for any of that, but its fans were the most vociferous (why is it that all teams with orange as their primary color always overdo everything, the orange especially?), and its cheerleaders the most luscious. Coach Don DeVoe and his three assistants all dressed in matching fraternity-house outfits, looking very much like a sh-bop quartet auditioning for *American Bandstand*.

Yet lurking beneath this glamorous surface was the reality that the top teams don't actually have to win anymore to qualify for the NCAA, and there was legitimate doubt that any of the fancy four had the least idea how to deal with that quaint anachronism known as a "must game." This suspicion was heightened last Thursday night when Notre Dame, trying to sit on a lead, only succeeded in squashing it. Did anybody here know how to play to win? The answer, it developed, was Danny Ainge for eight terrific seconds, and Virginia for two good halves.

The fuzzy-cheeked Ainge is a mythical figure who will get \$500,000 over three years playing third base for the Toronto Blue Jays starting this season. His best sport, his father swears, was football, but, after all, a fella has to give up something in order to become the leading vote-getter on the Academic All-America team, too. Two weeks ago, in the

first round, Ainge personally destroyed UCLA, occasioning a black scout from the NBA to tear after Ainge, screaming at him, "You got to sign with the NBA, Danny! You got to! It's white boys like you who make it better for us." But Danny is committed to the Blue Jays, where he is promoted as "the next Brooks Robinson." Yes, one Brigham Young loss and his basketball career would be done forever.

The Notre Dame-BYU game turned out to be an absolutely perfect athletic version of a worthy old stand-up gag. This is the one in which the Pope has all the cardinals at the Vatican, and an archbishop comes in and says there's a very important phone call for His Holiness. When the Pope returns, he tells the cardinals that he has some good news and some bad news. The good news is, it was God on the phone. The bad news is, He's calling from Utah.

The good news is, Coach Phelps conjures up a box-and-one for Ainge, he goes 0 for 4 (with a sacrifice fly) in the first half, and as late as midway through the second half Notre Dame is up 40-29. Then, as Irish Forward Kelly Tripucka lamented afterward: "We stopped being aggressive. We got on the defensive." Still, BYU's huge 6' 8", 6' 10" and 6' 11" front liners, the Mormon Tabernacle Towers, couldn't hit either, and Ainge struggled to reach double figures for an NCAA-record 111th time. He moaned to the refs and snapped at his teammates, especially when he erred himself. He is a consummately assured young hero, recalling Rick Barry: "I wasn't frustrated because of myself," he explained. "I was frustrated because I was taking up two players to guard me, and the other guys were missing good shots."

Finally, though, Notre Dame backed up to 48-49, and only got ahead again, 50-49, because Tripucka swished a gutsy long corner shot with 10 seconds left. Whereupon, after a time-out, Ainge did the most extraordinary thing. He took the inbounds pass, and, guarded tight all the way, dashed up the right sideline and slashed through three men at midcourt, while dribbling behind his back. "Oh my heavens," Cougar Forward Steve Trumbo said to himself, watching in disbelief upcourt. Ainge then went left past the fourth of the Irish at the free-throw line and slipped a shot over the fifth and final defender for a layup just before the buzzer. 51-50, BYU. It was the stuff of leg-

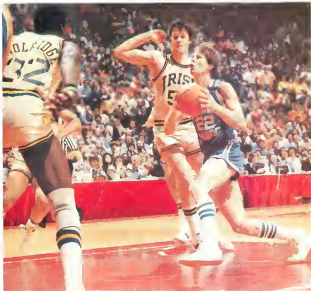
ends, and of winners. Long afterward, in the half-light of the darkened arena, Cougar Coach Frank Arnold went up to Ainge's father and embraced him. "Don," he said, "I just want to thank you for giving us your boy."

So BYU met Virginia in the final, and lost to the Wahos in a game almost eerily reminiscent of how Virginia whipped Tennessee in the opener. In that game Virginia blew an early lead when Sampson came out for his constitutional breather and was still down 31-36 several minutes into the second half. Then, suddenly, Jeff Lamp, the Wahos' other All-America, called for the ball and banged in a jumper. "That's when it's funnest for me, when it's tight," Lamp says. Next, Pow! Sampson blocked a shot. Fast-break bucket by Othell Wilson. Two more Lamp baskets. Turn out the

covered

Even without the ball, Sampson was a factor





Ainge's last obstacles in his epic dash against the Irish were Tim Andrae and Orlando Woolridge.

COOKIE AND LSU WERE MONSTERS

by Curry Kirkpatrick

It was shortly after LSU leveled Arkansas. Or it was shortly after LSU leveled Wichita State. It doesn't matter. The levelings and the levity tended to run together last weekend in New Orleans, as a million caterwauling Cajuns celebrated their Louisiana State Tili-guhs.

While LSU Coach Dale Brown and Center Greg Cook struggled past the throngs and into the bowels of the rocking and rolling Superdome, they were life imitating art: Gene Wilder and Richard Pryor as the white and black partners in the prison scene in *Shogun*. "Cook, you bad man. You real bad," roared several hundred fans. The fearsome Cookie-man usually appears annoyed at life in general, not to mention anything that detracts from his image as the baddest man on campus. This time, though, Cookie crumbled. "Definitely," he called out as he gathered in the waving, slapping hands. "We definitely bad."

Glancing over at this scene, Brown gave just the hint of a shuck 'n jive step of his own and was engulfed by the crowd along with Cook.

LSU's not-that-close 96-85 defeat of Wichita State in the final of the Midwest Regional on Sunday was keyed by MVP Rudy Macklin (21 points, 10 rebounds), Cook (19 and seven) and a relentless pressure defense that forced 17 turnovers. But the team's 31st win against three losses owed much to a sequence of motivational switch-ups that Brown plotted like a war-games strategist.

Last season the Tigers roared in the stretch, but in the NCAAs, Brown said, "We got blown to Pluto." This March he cooled it: cut practices in half, quit the chalk talks, omitted the pop-psychology T-shirts. "We were climbing the Matterhorn," Brown said. "I told them to enjoy the plant life on the way up."

When Georgia upset LSU in the SEC

NCAA REGIONALS continued

lights After 31-36, 31-12. Final: 62-48.

BYU was a Xerox. Early Wahoos lead turns to dust when Sampson takes mid-half coffee break. With its 2-3 zone, BYU holds to 33-30 into second half, even though Ainge is off again. But Lamp (7 for 11 in the first half) keeps Wahoos close. Then Sampson starts playing with a vengeance, and, like that, the whole game turns: from 33-30 BYU to 41-35 Virginia, and on, without incident, to the 74-60 conclusion.

Surely it is no coincidence that these games fell into the same pattern, for Sampson—"Stick"—is not yet fully formed, and he casts shadows altogether different from those of the other great giants before him. Chamberlain was overwhelming, force of size. Russell was pride, a triumphant ugly duckling. Mikal had been some of both: brawn and a late bloomer. Alcindor was moody mysterious, but street smart and often playing against the world. Walton was flamboyant, the rare big man unembarrassed by his size. He reveled in it, and in his idiosyncrasies. Whatever their attribution, they all dominated the action. They

ruled. By contrast, Sampson is often removed from the heart of the battle. Imagine: he scored only nine points against Tennessee.

But never mind, for ultimately his presence—"his existence," as Ainge characterizes it—can do in the opposition, physically and emotionally.

Sometimes, too, especially in the early going, he discombobulates his own teammates, who start working unnaturally to force his involvement. Against James Madison this season, in his hometown of Harrisonburg, Va., he played his worst, almost costing Virginia the win with bad foul shooting in the clutch. But afterward, utterly unperturbed, he moved about the team bus, passing out fudge. No one knew quite what to make of it. Above all, as we saw so well in Atlanta, Sampson's greatest power lies not in what he does, but in the fear of the unknown that he casts upon the scene—what he might do. There is really no telling what demands he will make in Philadelphia this week. All we know for sure is: attention must be paid.

As for Denny Ainge, heaven must wait for another day on another friendly field of strife.

tournament, Brown un-cooled it. He dreamed up a new slogan, "attack together," and everybody got pumped up about "getting silly in Philly."

As if he needed additional support—32,747 showed up at the Dome on Sunday and not many had Kansas twangs—Macklin received a pregame call from the Utah Stars' Darrell Griffith, his buddy since the eighth grade in Louisville. Griffith advised Macklin to do "something crazy."

But Macklin—the best offensive rebounder in college—did something sane. He went out and began making tap-back buckets the way he flashes smiles, fast and easy. Macklin, Cook and freshman Leonard Mitchell knocked Wichita State's glass-eating bookend forwards, Anselme Carr and Cliff Livingston, off the shelf as LSU scored 14 straight points early in the game, while the Shockers couldn't scratch on 10 straight possessions. And soon LSU's Ethan Martin (four steals, 10 assists) was infiltrating

enemy lines, leading his team on another streak of 17-7, which boosted the Tigers' margin from 25-14 to 42-21 late in the first half and effectively removed all suspense from the rest of the game.

The Wheatshockers' own moment of glory had come on Friday night when the Midwest Regional became the Kansas Sectional, that being the class struggle between the establishment Kansas Jayhawks and their neglected enemy within, Wichita State, which KU hadn't scheduled for 25 years.

After one NCAA official called the school "Wichita," Shocker Athletic Director Ted Bredehoft snapped, "We are Wichita State University." Whatever they were, the Shockers weren't prepared for Kansas' gargantuan Victor Mitchell. The 6' 10", 240-pound (before dinner) "Chocolate Moose" personally turned the 2-1-2 Jayhawk zone into a 2-7-2 and prevented Livingston and Carr from finding the seams inside.

However, when Mitchell worked the lane, there was little space for his teammates to breathe, much less for the gifted Darnell Valentine to penetrate. But Mitchell was sitting on the bench when Valentine's day came to a dismal end. The Kansas star had 21 points and his team had a 65-62 lead with 56 seconds left, but Valentine missed on a one-and-one, so Wichita State's Mike Jones—normally a 43.5% rock shooter—calmly threw in a 28-foot rainbow to bring the Shockers to within one point.

At :33 Valentine missed again, this time on a breakaway wide-open layup—well, Randy Smithson, son of Coach Gene Smithson, who had 16 points and seven assists, did own up to "nudging" Valentine from behind—so at :05 Jones calmly threw in another rainbow, from 24 feet to win the game, 66-65.

Or did Referee Tom Fraim's whistle-swallowing act win it? With two seconds remaining, Kansas' inbound passer, Booty Neal, faked WSU's Jay Jackson

continued

Louisiana State did virtually everything well in New Orleans, including play defense, as Cook (43) and Macklin demonstrate against Razorback Mike Young



into a blind pick set by Valentine. But after Jackson bowled over Valentine in an obvious foul, there was no call by Frain. "Sure I fouled him," Jackson said later. "I thought, oh my God, we came back to win and now I've given it away."

"That thing," Coach Smithson called the play. "I should have nailed Jackson's shoes to the floor."

"Thirty thousand people saw the foul," said a disgusted Ted Owens, the Kansas coach. "But not the refs."

To be precise, an NCAA tournament-record crowd of 34,036 attended Friday's festivities, the second game of which was a barbecue. Or pig-sticking. Or however LSU's 72-56 annihilation of the Arkansas Razorbacks might best be described. These were the same Hogs who had beaten the Tigers early in the season in Alaska, 86-76. "I don't believe in revenge," said LSU's Martin, who led his team with 16 points and eight assists. "Just say we returned a favor."

At the outset, with noise and emotion and adrenaline flooding the premises, neither team could have scored on a quintet of The Old Absinthe House bartenders. After 5:07 the score was 2-2; together LSU and Arkansas had missed 16 of 18 shots, and U.S. Reed hadn't made a thing from midcourt. But soon Macklin and Mitchell began playing volleyball on the boards and Cook began glowering... and talking.

Policeman Cook was off duty when Hog Center Scott Hastings produced 25 points and 14 rebounds in Alaska. This time the Cookie-man made Hastings wish he were in Hawaii. "I was telling the dude he ain't that good; he ain't bringing his stuff in here this time," said Cook, who scored 10 first-half points, ruled the key by intimidating leapers Reed and Darrell Walker and frustrated Hastings into three fouls and a hasty exit within the first eight minutes. LSU racked up runs of 12-4 and 12-3, and a swarming, vicious defense did the rest as the Tigers held Arkansas to 18 points (34-18) and 32% shooting before halftime, when the game virtually ended.

"It's hard to play catch-up against LSU," Arkansas Coach Eddie Sutton said. Not to mention wake-up, especially after the Hogs had gone into a collective coma from some of the elbows Cook unleashed. One of the Cookie-man's intention specials nearly caved in Hastings' chest; another sent Walker reeling into the nearest bayou, where he was delight-

ed to find his jaw intact. Cook fouled out on the Hastings elbow shot, but not before earning a technical when he angrily threw a bullet pass to a man in striped vestments.

"Cookie doesn't throw elbows," Brown said. "He just pivots funny." At the time, the coach was stroking the head of Cook's infant daughter, wondrously named Yesyrael Nonakimone, now wonderfully incongruous there, all tiny and tender in the meat-grinder arms of her enormous, powerful father.

Enormous and powerful, not to mention quick and elusive, are valid descriptions of the LSU juggernaut. Oh yes, And bad. As Philadelphia will discover about the Tigers, they *definitely* bad.

BACK HOME AGAIN IN PHILADELPHIA

by William F. Reed

In Bobby Knight's office there is a red metal folding chair on which the Indiana coach often sits while reviewing game films. The chair is of some sentimental value to Knight because, legend has it, it is the one he used for sitting and lolling purposes while guiding IU to the 1976 NCAA championship in the Spectrum in Philadelphia. "I honestly don't know if it's the chair I used or not," Knight said last week. His son, Tommy, is certain that it's not. "No," said Tommy. "The chairs we used had all kinds of cigarette burns and dents. This one looks brand new."

Nevertheless, the chair, a gift of the Spectrum, has served for five years to remind Bobby of the night of March 29, 1976, when Scott May, Quinn Buckner, Kent Benson & Co. completed a 32-0 season with a victory over Michigan in the championship game.

The chair will stay in Bloomington this week, but Knight will be going back to the Spectrum with a competent, if not quite great, team that has developed into perhaps the most pleasant surprise of

Knight's decade at Indiana. Only 7-5 against a tough December schedule that included North Carolina, Kansas State, Kentucky and Notre Dame, Indiana was such an uneven team that, one wintry morning in January, Knight was moved to moan, "This is the worst hand of cards I've ever been dealt."

So then all the Hoosiers did was shuffle 14-4 through the treacherous Big Ten, winning the championship on the final day of the season for the second straight year. The Hoosiers did it with a typical February surge—Knight's teams are at their best down the stretch—and with the cooperation of Iowa, which lost its last two Big Ten games to blow the league championship.

According to Knight, IU's season began to turn for the better when Isiah Thomas, the splendid 6'1" guard from Chicago, finally came to terms with himself and his role—and with Knight—in late December. Early on it seemed as though the coach and the star were engaged in a test of wills. At Indiana there has never been a question as to who wins those banks. When Thomas finally decided to do things Knight's way, the coach in turn gave him more freedom to operate in the open court, to use the myriad passing and shooting skills that make him the best point guard in the nation. Says Knight, "Isiah has matured tremendously since Christmas in terms of the responsibility he handles on the floor."

When Thomas came around, the other players fell into line. The 6'9" senior center, Ray Tolbert, a pussycat in December, became such a tiger that, Knight believes, he was the Big Ten's most valuable player. IU's other big man, 6'10" Landon Turner, finally began to understand his role as a scorer and rebounder. Burly Forward Ted Kitchel and brassy Guard Randy Witman shot well from the perimeter and contributed mightily to the man-to-man defense Knight loves so dearly. The result is that while this team doesn't compare with the '76 champs, it has become consistent and, at times, sensational.

After a spectacular performance in an early-round game against Maryland at Dayton, the Hoosiers came home last Friday to play upstart Alabama-Birmingham in the Midwest semifinals. By tip-off time in IU's Assembly Hall, Knight was almost a basket case. His team had practiced poorly. Once, Knight even had to climb all over Thomas. Everyone in town,

the players included, seemed to be looking ahead to the final four. After all, wasn't IU playing at home? Didn't the Hoosiers look just great against Maryland? And just what is an Alabama-Birmingham, anyway?

It was the perfect spot for another big upset, or so it seemed to Knight, and for a while the coach's fears seemed justified. Showing more quickness—and more heart—than most teams the Hoosiers played this season, the Blazers used a tight zone and some nice offensive moves to give Indiana all it could handle before finally losing 87-72. It was close to the end when too many fouls and too much Isaiah finally wore Alabama-Birmingham down. Taking charge after UAB's 5' 10" Glenn Marcus got into foul trouble, Isaiah scored 12 straight IU points, eight on free throws, as Indiana stretched it out in the last three minutes. The unsung hero was the other Thomas, Jim, who came off the bench to give Indiana much-needed quickness and maneuverability in the second half.

The next day Knight stood in the Indiana locker room and gave his players a little quiz.

"You tell me a team in our league that has more talent than UAB," Knight said.

The players were silent.

"All right," said Knight, "you tell me a team that combines that much talent with the right attitude."

More silence.

"I agree," said Knight. "Those UAB kids will have my undying respect for how hard they played the game. And we're facing the same thing in St. Joseph's. They want a piece of us. They're going to come out playing Indiana and all that Indiana entails."

After his shocking upset of DePaul at Dayton, St. Joseph's had come to Bloomington and outlasted Boston College 42-41 in one of the most boring games in NCAA history. Once BC threw 44 bounce passes in the same possession. "I'd like to see the stats on time of possession," said St. Joe's Coach Jim Lynam. "We had the ball like nine minutes of the game." But, at the end, the little school from Philly had it when it counted. Trailing by four with less than five minutes to go, and by 41-40 with 46 seconds left, St. Joe's got the game-winning points on two free throws by Bryan Warwick at 0:21 and then survived a couple of BC misses to earn the right to play IU for the trip to Philadelphia.



Rebounding against St. Joseph's, Tolbert shows one reason why Knight called him the Big Ten MVP.

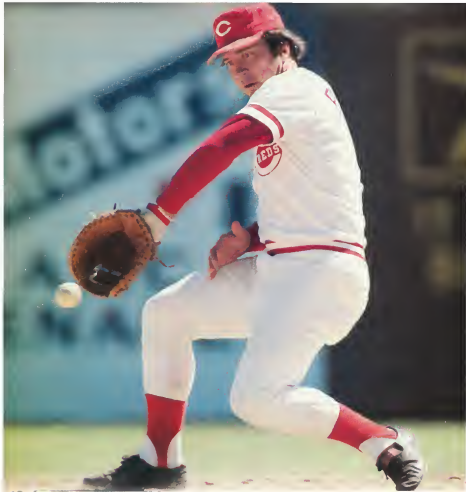
"We're going, for sure," said the St. Joseph's coach. "I don't know about them."

Knight and Lynam have been friends since 1961, when they played against each other in the final four—Knight for Ohio State, Lynam for St. Joe's. Knight recalled Lynam as "the little SOB who was too quick for me to catch." Lynam recalled Knight as "the slow SOB who couldn't catch me." Ohio State won, 95-69.

Sunday's big confrontation between Knight and Lynam for the regional title was just as one-sided, even though Knight got a scare Saturday evening when Isaiah twisted an ankle in a half-speed workout. "We didn't know until today if he would be able to play," said Knight. Not only did he play, but he also did his customary superb job of running the show on the floor. In the first half IU capitalized on almost every possession by shooting 66.7% against the St. Joe zone,

and took a 32-16 lead. That forced St. Joe's to go man-to-man—to no effect: Indiana outscored St. Joe's 8-1 to open the second period. At the end Knight took pity on Lynam, ordering his team to shoot only layups. Had he been playing an opponent he didn't like, Purdue, say, Knight could have won by 50 instead of 32 (78-46), which was convincing enough. So the Hoosiers going to Philadelphia are a red-hot team playing at top form. Whether that's good enough to beat LSU remains to be seen. Asked what he liked most about his team, Knight said, "What I like is that they're going to Philadelphia to play, not to watch." In '76, he said, it was different because IU was expected to win. "There was a feeling of 'Let's get it over with,' a feeling of relief when we won. This is like a bonus."

He was on the hot seat then. This time his chair will be more comfortable. **END**



JOHNNY GOES JOB HUNTING IN A TIGHT MARKET

Johnny Bench's announced desire to remain in the Cincinnati lineup, but catch only twice a week, is turning out to be something less than a hit with his teammates **by STEVE WULF**

Bench's baggage for spring training included a first baseman's mitt (left) and a glove for rightfield and third as well as his trusty catcher's models

Just in deep knee bends alone, the position is hell. You try catching 200 pitches a game from a frog's squat for 1,776 games. That comes to 355,200 pitches, not counting exhibition games or practice. Try 13 years of equipment changes, foul tips, bunts, dribblers, wild pitches, crossed signals, rookie pitchers, fallible umpires, Lou Brock, Omar Moreno, home-plate collisions, trips to the mound, trips to the screen, trips down the first-base line, ethyl chloride, Butazolidin, cortisone. And yet some people, including a number of teammates, still don't understand Why Johnny Can't Catch—at least not as often or as well as he once did.

Johnny Bench has hit more home runs (323) than any catcher in history. Only he and Bill Dickey have been able to catch 100 games or more for 13 consecutive seasons, and Bench is just 187 regular-season games shy of the all-time record held by Al Lopez, who needed 19 years to catch 1,918 games. With Bench behind the plate the Cincinnati Reds won six division titles and played in four World Series. He has won two MVP awards and been named to 12 All-Star teams. Surely a plaque awaits him in the Hall of Fame.

The price he has paid includes six broken bones in one foot, four in the other, a network of scars on his left shoulder from surgery on the acromioclavicular joint, a broken right thumb, a fractured left pinkie, lower-back spasms, circulation problems in his hands and grotesque toenails from balancing on his haunches for 2,000 hours. "I'd have been scratched if I was a racehorse, with all the But I've taken," says Bench.

The curse of this man in the iron mask is that he made catching look so easy for so many years that folks just assumed he could go on indefinitely. Even Al Lopez (six broken fingers on his right hand), after whom the Reds' spring stadium in Tampa is named, says, "Johnny had such great rhythm as a catcher that I thought he'd last longer than this." So last August, when Bench told the Reds and the press that he wanted to catch only two days a week in 1981, people facetiously

asked if Tuesdays and Saturdays would be all right.

Bench wasn't joking. In September he met with Reds President Dick Wagner, who said the club would honor his request. In October Cincinnati picked up another catcher, great-glove, no-hat Mike O'Berry from the Cubs, as more a backup type than a regular. In January Bench said he was going to bring four different gloves to camp and try to win a job. In February Wagner was quoted—out of context, he says—in a speech to the Dayton Agonis Club, an organization of ex-jocks, as saying that Bench's request was a contract play (his paycheck, reportedly, is \$450,000 a year, while George Foster and Ken Griffey earn nearly double that figure). Bench got angry. Which matched the mood of his teammates, who were saying things like catching certainly hadn't hurt Johnny's golf game. Manager John McNamara was baffled. The only positions Bench could shoot for besides catcher were first base, third base and rightfield, but at each the Reds already had capable players.

"I quit catching dry games after night games last year," says Bench, continued

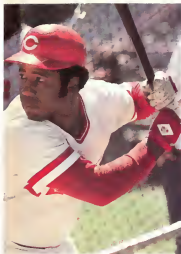


Bench is a compendium of catchers' aches

PHOTOGRAPHS BY WALTER BOGGS JR.



Bench's demands sit just fine with at least two Reds, backup catchers O'Berry (left) and Nolan



First Baseman Driessen won't easily be budged.



Centerfielder Griffey fears a falloff in fielding.



All-Star Third Baseman Knight figures Bench is just one of 100,000 guys who want to take his job.

"I did it one time in August and felt it for four or five days. Sometimes I just wanted to stay in bed all day. Catching is mentally and physically exhausting. One day of catching is like five days at third base."

This is no crybaby. Trainer Larry Starr, who has been with the Reds for 10 years, says Bench has a very high pain threshold. "He hurts more than he ever lets on," says Starr. In 1972 Bench waited until the season ended to determine whether a lesion discovered on his right lung was cancerous. It wasn't, and it was removed surgically. He is very serious about cutting back on his catching and just as serious about playing every day. "They tell me I've put them on a spot," he says. "Sure I have. But I kept them off the spot for 13 years."

Needless to say, Bench's desire to have a crack at their positions hasn't sat well with First Baseman Dan Driessen, Third Baseman Ray Knight and Rightfielder Dave Collins. "The only way he can put himself at first base is if he's the manager," says Driessen. "And he ain't the manager yet. Suppose George Foster suddenly told the team he wanted to pitch or play shortstop."

"One hundred thousand guys want my position, and Johnny's one of them," says Knight, an All-Star. "If he's better than me, he can play third base. But nobody gave me this job. I won it. He's going to have to win it from me."

"I sat on the bench three years ago, somebody got hurt, and I've hit .300 the last two years," says Collins, who also stole 79 bases last year. "I don't plan on giving my job to anyone." Griffey, who moves from right to center this year, has expressed his reluctance to play between Foster and Bench, neither of whom is Ed Roush. "I don't blame them," says Bench. "That's what I'd say if some catcher came in and told me he was going to play my position."

What's a manager to do? McNamara, himself a former minor league catcher ("I was lucky with injuries—all I had was a sick bat"), says, "The agreement was made, and we'll have to live with it. We'll just have to use common sense and play it by ear. It's a delicate situation, but I think it's a solvable one."

Bench has expressed a desire to get 400 at bats this year. After all, he doesn't want to become Johnny Bench, small b. But catching twice a week would only give him 54 games behind the plate.

continued

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about 200 at bats. Unless an injury occurs—and the Reds could be forgiven for wanting one, to solve the problem—Bench could be worked into maybe another 27 games without ruffling anybody's feathers. That would still leave him far short of 400 ABs, Wagner says. "We agreed to honor his request to catch twice a week. We didn't guarantee him a job anywhere else."

Obviously, the Reds are hoping he'll capitulate. Although his throwing skills have diminished, the Reds are a better team with Bench behind the plate. He can still control a game better than any catcher; he knows the hitters and calls pitches astutely. Equally important, if less apparent, is that Bench has a great talent for handling young pitchers. It won't do the Reds' relatively young staff much good to have to work with a different catcher every time out. But Bench is a prideful man. Too prideful, says his friend, the former Tiger catcher, Bill Freehan (16 stitches in left hand, 12 in right hand, 12 on top of head, dislocated thumb, spinal fusion, 30 cortisone shots). "Pride has a lot to do with his desire to get out," Freehan says. "Look, there's always some boered-up guy in the stands who's yelling that you can't throw anymore. There comes a point when you realize he may be right. But even after I couldn't throw, I knew I could run a game better than any other catcher. I still felt I could sit behind the plate. Johnny should forget about the bum in the stands. He's still a great catcher."

Indeed, last Saturday, a Bench's first game this spring as a catcher, a ball sailed away from him, and he had to chase it to the screen. According to Bench, "Some guy yelled, 'You can't even catch once a week, much less twice.'"

There is always the possibility of a drastic solution—trading Bench—and though Wagner denies any thought of that, he has let Tony Perez, Pete Rose and Joe Morgan slip away. Rose says, "If Johnny wants to come to the Phillies, I'll be happy to find another position." Bench conducted a small survey of American League designated hitters in the off-season to find out how they like their jobs. His findings were not of the nature to send him knocking on doors around the AL. Ironically, the National League came within only three votes of approving the DH last year. The staunch-

est opponent of the DH in the NL is Dick Wagner.

During his career Bench has been an immovable object for at least a dozen aspiring Cincinnati catchers: Bob Barton, Dan Breeden, Jim Coker, Pat Corrales, Vic Correll, Johnny Edwards, Hal King, Don Pavletich, Bill Plummer, Sonny Rumberto, Jimmie Schaffer and Don Werner. And the catching corps behind Bench is as strong now as it's ever been. The nominal starter this year is the bookish-looking Joe Nolan (two knee injuries), a good journeyman catcher and left-handed hitter who had the highest batting average (.312) on the club last season, in only 154 at bats. By his own admission, though, Nolan has no power and only an average arm. Last week in an exhibition game against Kansas City, the Royals stole five bases on him in the first inning.

Behind Nolan is O'Berry (injury-free—he's only 26), a major league receiver with a minor league batting average of .206. However, O'Berry worked during the winter with hitting master Harry (The Hat) Walker. The Hat, who was wearing a straw number while watching O'Berry play the other day, says, "If I had him with the '66 Pirates, we would have won the pennant that year. If he played regularly, he could hit .270." Already this spring, O'Berry has thrown out the Pirates' swift Moreno.

The Reds also have two promising catchers in the farm system, Dave Van Gorder and Steve Christmas, whose honest-to-goodness nickname is "Tree." Van Gorder was being groomed as Bench's eventual successor, but he tore up his left knee in a home-plate collision last June and had to have surgery, thus setting back the timetable.

Unfortunately for the Reds, the combined skills of these catchers-in-waiting couldn't equal Bench's in his prime. "He elevated the whole profession," says the Reds' non-roster catcher, Greg Muhlberg (broken forearm, broken fingers, left-knee problem). "He was the guy who made it known that catchers just don't strap on the gear." Says Rose, "He was the greatest I ever saw, the greatest there ever will be." Bench knows it, too. "Some guy once came up to me with his alltime all-star team," he says. "He told me I was third on the list of catchers. Third!

I almost lost my dinner right there."

"I know that I'm Johnny Bench because of catching, and because of the Reds, and I'm grateful for all of that. But I want to be able to help this club three or four years down the line, and I can't do that if I'm catching every day, and I can't do it if I'm sitting on the bench. I've been in four World Series, and I've played with the greatest—Morgan, Perez, Rose, Foster. I've taken great satisfaction in bringing along young pitchers like Tommy Hume."

"Only half my life is over, and I want the second half to be just as fulfilling as the first half. I want to play golf and tennis, hunt and fish. But I see guys like Randy Hundley and Tom Haller hobbling around because they caught too much. I don't want to be like that."

Bench is really the Reds' last hero. Although attendance in Cincinnati was a healthy 2,002,450 last year, it has been slipping gradually from a record 2,629,708 in 1976. First Perez went (1976), then Rose ('78), then Morgan ('80), and the Reds haven't been in the Series since 1976—they can't afford to lose Bench, in the stands or on the field. As Collins says, "We need J.B., his leadership, his experience, his hitting." Yes, he can still hit: 24 homers and 68 RBIs in only 360 at bats last year.

Bench's decision, though, has divided not only the team but the fans as well. The Dayton area supplies much of the crowd at Riverfront Stadium, and Dayton's *The Journal Herald* asked its readers two weeks ago: yes or no, should the Reds honor Johnny Bench's request to catch only twice a week? The results were split down the middle. In fact, there were 297 affirmatives and 297 negatives with only three votes left to be counted. They all turned out to be yes.

Typical of the may-sayers was the anonymous fan who tacked this note onto his ballot: "He signed a contract to catch for the Reds. Now he can catch until his contract runs out. Then he can take his two-day crap to Yankee George."

Then there was the opinion of a Bench warmer: "I hope John gets to spend the rest of his life doing whatever he wants to do. He has already given so much of his super talent to the game. If the Reds lose J.B., there will be little if any reason to spend time and money at Riverfront Stadium."

Irrepressible Mike Newlin of the New Jersey Nets believes in making the most of his time, on and off the court

by DOUGLAS S. LOONEY

Mike Newlin of the New Jersey Nets—two good examples of what obscurity really means—has been trying on cowboy hats for more than an hour in a Denver store. Enthusiastically. Very enthusiastically. "I have enthusiasm when I can't possibly justify it," says Newlin with a laugh, which is the perfect attitude for a player on one of the three worst teams in pro basketball.

In fact, a case can be made that Newlin, who is 6' 5" but spends much of his time on a level with true grit—see the loose ball on the floor; see Newlin dive for it; see that Newlin is the only player to dive for it—is the Nets' sole link with respectability as their nightmare season limps to a close. New Jersey President Joe Taub, whose team was 24–54 at week's end, admits that Newlin "has been our bright spot," and General Manager Charles Thomas calls him "instant offense." Or, in the case of the Nets, their only reliable offense.

As playoff time approaches—the Nets were among the first to call in sick—many teams would like to have Newlin, a guard, in their colors. For good reason.

He leads New Jersey in many categories, including thorough game preparation and want-to, as well as free throw percentage (.891), playing time and scoring (21.4 points per game) and ranks second in assists (287). A shooter getting assists is a novelty, but Newlin takes pride in his passing. During a bus ride to a practice the other day, he joked with teammate Maurice Lucas, saying, "I'd have even more assists if I played on a club with better shooters."

Newlin has a rep as a "flake lost in space," according to one general manager. But that's partly because he has an all-star mind, which makes him a rare hard in the NBA. It also helps make him eloquent when it comes to talking about what it means to be a pro and the true significance of winning and losing.

"Winning a game is ephemeral," he has said. "To just try to win is blasphemous. You have to do it right. I don't want anything to do with the bastardization of the purity of the game. The pleasure I get is playing. Until the final buzzer, I haven't lost. I'm a winner for 47 minutes and 50 seconds. So what does the winner get that I don't? Ten more seconds of pleasure, that's all. The mere fact I tried is a win. But the main point is, it's just such a pleasure to be a professional athlete. The problem with many athletes is they take themselves seriously and their sport lightly."

For the moment, however, he's taking his hat seriously. "Rarely do you buy anything you feel this good about," he says. "Look at me. I am where I am. Today, I'm a Denverite. I'm the perfect chameleon." Overcome with delight, he rushes out onto Larimer Street and asks some strangers walking past, "Do I look O.K. in my new hat?"

A startled middle-aged woman says, "You look great, like you own all of Colorado and Arizona, too."

"Do you mean that?"

"Of course I do."

"Oh, thank you very much ma'am."

The hat. It sums up Mike Newlin. Here's a guy making \$250,000 a year getting positively euphoric over a \$30 hat. "I couldn't ask to improve one thing in my life," he says. "Honest, my life is a ride on a Ferris wheel with every rotation more exciting than the last." Newlin makes Pollyanna sound grumpy. Driving through some New Jersey city streets not long ago, Newlin was saying, "Gosh, isn't this pretty?" Actually, no, but to Newlin it really was.

Newlin views his gypsylike life in the NBA as if it were a first-class ticket to everywhere. Which it is. He doesn't go to cities, he embraces them. In Philadelphia he studies the Continental Congress and says, "I fall in love. I stand there and reflect on Franklin walking on those same cobblestones. I'm not a tourist with a camera but a visitor with an inner eye." In and around Boston he has examined the famed harbor and followed Paul Revere's route through Lexington. In Washington he likes to visit Arlington National Cemetery and immerse himself in the life of Robert E. Lee, who lived close by and is buried there. In New Jersey—his Hackensack apartment contains not only 32 bottles of vitamins but also a chart of the history of man on the wall—he has traced the route of Washington's retreat from New York. In rural Ohio he loves the farms; in San Diego he loves the golf courses. He is truly a man for all towns. While other players lie in hotel rooms watching TV and grouching about what has been written of their wondrous abilities in the press, Newlin says he has "a game plan for every city. For me, life without learning is death."

Reporters don't interview Newlin; he bombards them with questions. "I love writers," he says. "They're so clever." That's what he says. You can criticize Newlin and still be his friend. O.K., Mike, your dribbling isn't world class and your left-handed drive could stand a little polishing. "Criticism doesn't bother Mike," says Cindy Lincomb, his girl friend, who lives in Houston, "because he has never played for a harsher critic than himself." One of Newlin's teammates, Jan van Breda Kolff, says that "Mike treats it like a compliment when someone points out a deficiency. He listens."

continued

'GENIUS IS PERSEVERANCE IN DISGUISE'

PHOTOGRAPHS BY PAUL KENNEDY

Newlin's idea of having a ball is to make at least 100 straight free throws at every practice



tens very carefully and then goes right to work correcting the fault."

Newlin, 32, is, in fact, one of the last of the old-fashioned players. Not nearly as good as, say, John Havlicek, but like him. Newlin loves to make personal appearances to help the team, assist old ladies into their chairs and stand at attention during the national anthem. Though he's finishing off his 10th year as a pro, when he's in the game, he's forever diving onto the floor. "People praise my hustle, but it's not even worthy of praise," Newlin says. "It's just basketball. Every possession is worth eight-tenths of a point. It's that simple."

He pushes, shoves, harasses. He's relentless. And he shoots an exquisitely precise jumper with one of the fastest releases in the NBA. "I love it that at one end of the court you have the finesse of a jumper and then you run 94 feet and you have the brutality of football," Newlin says. "And I love the reality of this game. Guess what? If I don't hit my jumper, I'm gone. Clean." Once, when asked why he was wearing gloves, Newlin replied, "You put your money in a wallet, don't you?"

Newlin is totally dedicated to the game. "Guys get to be pros," he says, "and they think they don't have to practice hard anymore. That's a big mistake." With that, he looks into his omnipresent notebook for a quote he has copied. "Genius is perseverance in disguise." He offers it without comment, but there's no doubt that's how he views himself.

Newlin is the first Net to arrive at practice, must be first in all the running and suicide drills and so on and always stays around until he makes at least 100 foul

shots in a row. "All making free throws is," says Newlin, the NBA's fourth alltime best foul shooter, with a career percentage of .870, behind Rick Barry, Calvin Murphy and Bill Sharman, "is using your body as a machine. Just line up and let it fly. It's non-thought. I wouldn't have a guy on my team who didn't shoot 80% on free throws. Anybody can do it. Shoot 100 free throws a day all summer and you can do it." In February, Newlin missed two foul shots in a game. The next day at practice he shot 300, making 249 of 250 in one stretch.

Then there are Newlin's shoes that he had specially designed—they're somewhere between a high cut and a low cut—to "cradle" his ankles while adding extra rubber to give him more spring. "What you have to do is convert forward motion to vertical motion," he says, "and something has to absorb the transition. If it's true, as the experts say, that 75% of your shot is in your legs, isn't it amazing how little research players put into shoes?"

Newlin's equally scientific in honing his sweet jumper, which he never practices from farther out than 15 feet. "If you can shoot from 15 feet, you can shoot from 20," he says. And though during games he sometimes seems to fling prayers from long range, he says, "I have never thrown up a wild shot, even in practice. One bad shot undermines a month of hard work."



Newlin leads the Nets in scoring and is second in assists

Nor does Newlin believe that there are natural basketball players. "Nobody is inherently anything," he says, "except a pain in the ass. If it's natural, I suspect it. If it's disciplined, I respect it." Nobody is more disciplined than Newlin. No boozing, no late nights in different beds. "There are so many things to do that my mind only wants to sleep six hours a day but my body says, 'Sorry, pal, but I've got to borrow five more.'" He's methodical—Wheaties on game day, for example, because "I figure if I eat like a champion, maybe I'll play like one"—and intense, which prompts Linscomb to describe his on-court appearance as being that of a "warrior in Ben Hur."

This intensity was bred into him as one of the 10 kids of Vincent and Henrietta Newlin of Portland, Ore. "We weren't allowed to get Cs," says Mike. To reinforce this concept, Vincent insisted that his son bring home every schoolbook he had every night, regardless of whether he had any homework. Another important influence was Mike's maternal grandfather, who would dress up in a suit, tie, spats and cane to go to work—as a mason. His other grandfather was just as normal; he walked around quoting Shakespeare. Perhaps the most valuable lesson came from Vincent, an insurance man, who, Mike recalls, "always



A group of Boston children hear of the midnight ride of Paul Revere from Newlin, a history freak

came home with a smile on his face."

Even now, the mere mention of Portland sets Mike to rhapsodizing over the smell of fir and pines and 14 kinds of fruit trees. When he was in the ninth grade, the family moved to LaCrescenta, Calif. and Mike took up basketball—typically, in his own way. By himself. "All you learn playing with other guys are bad habits," he says. At 5' 6", however, he was too short even to play alone. But a neighbor lady had read of Russians putting a drop of iodine in their orange juice every other day to promote growth. Mike did it and grew from 5' 9" to 6' 3" between his sophomore and junior years in high school. Was drinking iodine smart? "Whatever I do is whatever I do," he says. "The only mistake is to analyze it."

He attended the University of Utah, where on the first day of classes he went to each professor and said, "I am an A student. What do I have to do to get an A?" From then on, he says, "They looked at me differently." An English major, he graduated with a 3.7 average but failed to get a Rhodes scholarship, partly, he thinks, because when he was asked during a Rhodes interview what he would do if he were stuck in the wilds of Outer Mongolia alone, he said he'd just step into the nearest phone booth and call home collect. But he was not totally whimsical at Utah. "I recognized I could make a jumper," he says. "It wasn't talent, it was time." Having discovered that the other players practiced 15 to 17 hours a week, he set his schedule at 42 hours.

"I can't stand being a variable; I'm a constant," says Newlin, defending his hard work. "But you've got to be able to handle the bad times. That's when you face reality, when you get smoked. You need rude awakenings. It teaches you humility. Not that I haven't learned enough humility in 10 years."

Newlin was with the Houston Rockets from 1972 until he was traded to the Nets before the 1979-80 season, for a second-round draft choice and \$25,000. Characteristically, he told the Nets, "You gave up too much." During his last three years in Houston, Newlin says he was locked in a personality conflict with Coach Tom Nissalke and got to sit a lot. Nissalke disagrees, saying he discovered that what Mike did best was come off the bench. Whatever, Newlin says, "The best team players always sit in the NBA. Actually, it was a great pleasure to sit

with these great guys, a thrill a minute really. It's a wonderful subculture. You can learn more in adversity than in good times." Which explains why Newlin has learned so much. In 10 years his team has made the playoffs only three times.

At Houston, he says, "I could have moped around. Instead, I worked my butt off in practice every day. So what happened? I sat. For three years. That's O.K. The coach doesn't answer to me. I am chattel to management and a pawn to the coach. I love it. I like doing what I'm told. He's the coach, and he can do whatever he wants. Did I get a bum deal? No, I got a deal. That's all. Every athlete overstates his ability. I once told a coach, 'You always think less of us and we always think more.' It's a chain. Players think that they're great and the coach thinks that they're not; the general manager doesn't think either one is any good; and the owner is wondering why he didn't get into baseball instead."

The night after purchasing the cowboy hat, following a rare horrible performance in a 140-123 Nets' loss to Denver—5 for 14 and only 27 minutes playing time—Newlin was asked if he was depressed. "That word isn't in my vocabulary," he answered. Later, as he walked into the hotel lobby, a passerby inquired, "Who won?" "We did," said Newlin, cheerfully. Why did you say that? "Oh, people don't want to be associated with losers. It makes them feel bad, and I didn't want that guy to feel bad." Newlin has been known to describe other poor performances as his "zenith of embarrassment," and after the Nets were again blazed recently he said, "We should go back on the floor and let the fans boo us for 15 minutes."

He sits down in the hotel coffee shop, studies the menu and, in what passes for pessimism in Newlin's life, asks the waitress, "Do you have bread and water? That's what I deserve." He orders a BLT on whole wheat. It comes on white. "I deserve it," he says. "It's stale, too. I deserve it." Then he orders a piece of apple pie. The waitress brings cherry. "I deserve it."

But it's all said in great good spirit. Various people offer condolences, and Newlin muses, "Gee, I hate to let the coach down. I'm glad he took me out of there. If I'm not making baskets, I don't deserve to play."

At which point Newlin bumps into his hat, knocking it off a chair. "Sorry, pal," he says to The Hat. "Isn't this something? I have a new friend—my hat." He treats it gently, as you would any friend. "Mike has a lot of weird ways," says Harry Barrett, an old friend who is chief statistician for the Rockets.

Over the cherry pie—"I bet this is better than the apple would've been"—the conversation drifts to things other than basketball: Newlin's interest in An-



The contract is up soon, but Newlin won't have to go out in hand

cient Greek history, the Civil War, espionage, computers, juggling, real estate, archery. Right now he is deeply involved in Bible study, but only as an academic pursuit. "I'm not religious, I'm a Bibliocist," he says. "All the Bible is a treatise on how to live life. It's just like any Parker Brothers game. The rules are on the box top." Soon he plans to learn Hebrew and Greek so he'll be able to read the original versions of the Bible. Why? "These days the translations are fraught with Victorian and Elizabethan thinking," he says.

The cherry pie finished, Newlin suddenly brings the meal to a close with a clap of his hands. Then he announces, "Now we're going to have some real fun. Guess what we get to do? Put on our hats."

END

A DESIRE TO EXCEL

Ronnie Darling, Yale All-America baseball player, personifies the values that A. Bartlett Giamatti, school president and fan, extols by FRANK DEFORD

Once I decided not to go into the draft out of high school, that really made up my mind for Yale, too. I mean, if I was going to get a college education, why not go for the best? Of course, Yale doesn't give athletic scholarships, so I was going to have to work to get through, and my father would have to pay part of the tuition. He said, "Don't worry, Ronnie, we'll get the money somehow." I've never been sorry for my decision.

—RONNIE DARLING, YALE '92
ALL-AMERICA BASEBALL PLAYER

When the new president of Yale, a sometime sportswriter and devoted baseball fan (Red Sox division) named A. Bartlett Giamatti, addressed the Association of Yale Alumni last spring, he selected as his topic for this significant occasion the subject of sports. "Yale cares enough to assert that athletics plays a vital part in the education of its young people and in the ongoing life of everyone else," he said. "As a sign of its commitment to athletics, Yale will treat athletics according to the same central educational values and with the same desire for excellence that it brings to other essential parts [of the university]. . . . Let it go forth that there is a strong spirit at Yale, a strong spirit compounded of respect for the glories of mind and body striving in harmony."

Notwithstanding these noble sentiments, the speech irritated a good many alumni because Giamatti also suggested that college athletics were getting out of whack, even in the Ivy League. Says Giamatti, "I was supposed to have called for our athletics to be de-emphasized, a word I never used, any more than I ever would employ that vile phrase 'student-athlete.'" Indeed, those old Bulldogs who were so upset by their



Darling, who was 11-2 with a 1.31 ERA last year, could be the first pick in the major league draft

president's words might reread this part of the speech:

"I don't want there to be any doubt about what I believe. I think that winning is important. Winning has a joy and discrete purity to it that cannot be replaced by anything else. Winning is

important to any man's or woman's sense of satisfaction and well-being. Winning is not everything, but it is something powerful, indeed beautiful, in itself, something as necessary to the strong spirit as striving is necessary to the healthy character."



Tapped by Yale, Glavin said, "All I ever wanted to be president of was the American League."

Nonetheless, Ivy League—pardon, Ivy Group—presidents tend to be a little naïve about the real world of college sports; it's a jungle out there. Except for regular pilgrimages to Fenway Park and two years as a young instructor at Princeton, Glavin has been ensconced in the athletic abbey at New Haven since he arrived there as an undergraduate in 1956. It might, then, come as something of a surprise to Glavin to learn that Yale alumni have made illegal tenders to Ronnie Darling. "You know," says Ronnie Darling, "'Need anything, Ronnie?' 'Can we help you out at all, Ronnie?' 'Just let us know, Ronnie.'"

Yale men have done this? Yale men? He nods shyly. Firm proof, the human race is indeed going to hell in a hand basket.

But why you, Ronnie Darling? You're just a baseball player. Possibly we could comprehend, even forgive, Yale men tipping their football players. The Elis have won 709 football games, more than anyone, and victory has become a pleasant habit. But baseball?

"Everybody wants to win," says Ronnie Darling.

Yes, there is that. There is a joy and discrete purity to it. But there is more. Ronnie Darling is the closest thing to an athletic miraculist extant. Before last season, when Yale went 21-11 and he became a starting pitcher—15 appearances, 12 starts, 12 complete games, an 11-2 record, two saves, 1.31 ERA—the Elis hadn't won that many baseball games since 1948, when the captain was George (Good Field, No Hit) Bush. In fact, until last season Yale had gone 16 years without a winning baseball team. And it wasn't just that Yale had Ronnie Darling to pitch last season. The Elis also had Ronnie Darling to hit: a school-record .384 average and a .589 slugging percentage.

Yale has produced two Heisman Trophy winners and more football All-Americans than any other college. Almost 4% of all U.S. Olympians who have won gold medals have been Yale graduates. Walter Camp competed for Yale, as did Pudge Heffelfinger, Calvin Hill, Frank Merriwell, Tony Lavelli and Don Scholander. B.D. of Doonesbury played there.

continued

But this also is true: last spring Ronnie Darling had one of the greatest seasons a Yale athlete has ever had.

And with that name, too. Imagine being named Ronnie Darling and having a real good chance to live up to it. Imagine being 20 years old and a Yale man in the spring named Ronnie Darling. Imagine being 20 years old and a Yale man in the spring standing 6'3", shaped and tapered, 205 pounds worth, with dark eyes that dance and fix on curveballs and people alike and olive skin tinted just enough never to pale. Imagine.

"This will probably sound egotistical," says Ronnie Darling, sounding in fact, very thoughtful. "but when I'm playing well, I think I can decide any game—my pitching, my hitting, you know, something."

Imagine being named Ronnie Darling and being half Irish and half Chinese-Hawaiian. It's last summer and your first time up at Yankee Stadium, in an amateur All-Star Game: 450-foot home run, leftfield bullpen. Now it's the ninth inning, you're 3 for 5, your team is ahead 10-9, but the other side has men on first and second, nobody out, meat of the order coming up. The call goes out to the outfield to bring Ronnie Darling in to pitch. You come to the mound. Strike out the first guy on fastballs. Strike out the second guy on fastballs, 90 to 95 mph. Third guy is looking for fastballs. Throw him a curve. Easy pop-up. Game's over. Oh, you Ronnie Darling. Imagine that.

What will Ronnie Darling do now? "This is the time for him," says Phillie Scout Dick Lawlor. "So much will depend on how well he plays this spring." Some major league bird dogs think that Ronnie Darling may well go No. 1 in June's draft, for which he will be eligible for the first time in three years. So it's time to step out now. There's not much more time to be a student or even a student-athlete.

Wherever he goes in baseball, Ronnie Darling will return to Yale to get his degree. He'll finish his junior year both academically and athletically this June. A C+ student majoring in history, Darling readily acknowledges that he's no intellectual, that he has had to put in long hours to get his grades. In the process he has come to understand that the value of an education at a school such as Yale transcends what one learns from books and professors. "When I came here,

sometimes I thought I'd just play baseball and go through the motions of getting a degree," he says, "but the place is so competitive, it pushes you. And whatever your special ability, you can see it juxtaposed. I'm a baseball player, but I'll go into some class and there may be somebody sitting next to me who can play the piano better than I can play baseball. That's humbling, and it has been good for me. I can go out now and play in the pros, and whatever happens, I won't be lost."

Gismatti: "People talk of a scandal in athletics, but it seems to me that the real scandal is implicit: the very fraudulence of the college athletic enterprise, its acceptance as a mere ornament in the academic process. Too often, in too many institutions, athletics are self-contained.

They must be made part of the whole educational process.

"To exploit our students as a source of revenue is a scandal and a shame. It also is foolish because anybody who thinks that by filling a football stadium you are going to even start to balance the budget is either kidding himself or trying to kid the rest of us.

"The point of college athletics is not to make money. The point is to provide another and very real opportunity in which people might be challenged, in which they might learn more about themselves and how to work with others."

Last summer Ronnie Darling was chosen MVP of the Cape Cod (Mass.) League, a very tough amateur circuit made up of college players. Ronnie Darling's team-



A .384 hitter last season, Darling performs in centerfield for the Elms when he isn't on the mound

mates would often bring the weightiest volumes they could lay their hands on—"Karl Marx, stuff like that"—and leave them in the dugout, screaming suggestions at him that the books would give him something to do while he awaited his turn at bat.

At first many players doubted Ronnie Darling because he was a Yale and all that. "What is this All-America?" one of them asked him. "Is this Ivy League All-America?" And then, as Ronnie Darling showed he was the best, he became more an object of frustration than of curiosity. Nobody else was Ronnie Darling, All-America of Yale.

In one Cape Cod game, after he had banged out a couple of hits, he came up again, and the catcher started chattering him up, ragging him. The kid behind the

plate was mad; his club was getting whipped, and this Ivy Leaguer was largely responsible. Ronnie Darling got mad at himself for listening. "The guy was trying to get to me and, well, obviously he was," he says. But forcing himself to concentrate, Ronnie Darling lashed a double and then glared at the catcher from second base.

The next batter lined a hard single, a hit so solid the leftfielder came up with it on one bounce. The third-base coach called for Ronnie Darling to hold up at third, but he ran right through the sign and zeroed in on the catcher, who took the throw long before the baserunner arrived. Ronnie Darling slammed into the catcher, jarring the ball loose. As the two players lay in the dirt staring at each other, the catcher finally broke a smile. "I knew he admired me then," Ronnie Darling says.

Ronnie Darling comes from circumstances that are modest, both financially and academically. Ron Sr., for many years an enlisted man in the Air Force, is now foreman of a machine shop in Worcester, Massachusetts, which Ronnie and everybody else who has ever lived there always refer to as Wustermass, as if it were some obscure church holiday. The Darlings have lived in Wustermass since Ronnie Darling was six. He'd been born and raised to that age in Hawin, where the Air Force had sent Ron Sr. and where he'd met and married Luciana Mikins Aikala.

Neither Ron nor Luciana was reared by natural parents. He grew up in several foster homes in northeastern Vermont, being shifted from farm to farm to help out at harvesttime. A superb athlete, Ron was offered two college scholarships. But he "knew it all" and joined the service instead. Mrs. Aikala died while delivering Luciana. Her father, unable to cure for the baby himself, left her to the rather desultory upbringing of relatives. As soon as she fell in love, Luciana married the Ascle from far-off New England. When she bore Ronnie, she was only 18.

Luciana stands 6' 3", and one can imagine her as a Lorna Doone, blocked out from the sun by her giant kinsmen. Not only are both her sons 6' 3", but Eddie, 19, is 6' 5", 230; Brian, 14, stands nearly 6' 4"; and Charlie, at 12, bears all the earmarks of good size.

The Darling brothers are all fine ath-



History major Darling reads in Sterling Library.

letes. Eddie, a first baseman with a fast bat, left St. Leo's College in Florida and was selected in the second round by the Yankees in the draft this January. So far Brian and Charlie look more like basketball prospects.

Yale plays 33 intercollegiate sports, more than any other college in America. However, for all practical purposes, the Eli athletic program amounts to football and 32 other activities in which the score is kept. Consequently, a great deal of effort was made to woo Ronnie Darling away from the diamond and over to the gridiron, where he had been a high school star. As a freshman, he was a quarterback and a monster back, whatever that is, but it doesn't matter, because he abandoned football altogether at the end of the season.

Baseball had been Ronnie Darling's great love, starting when he was five or six. Every night, no matter how tired Ron Sr. was, he'd hit Ronnie Darling 100 ground balls and throw him 100 pitches. Of course, this could easily have led to an unhealthy emphasis on sports, had the father also not urged his son to apply himself in other ways. "All I want to do when I sign is give my father something," Ronnie Darling says. "I know he won't

continued



take any money, but I have to give him something."

When it came time for Ronnie Darling to decide on a college, the sun-kissed baseball universities of the South and Southwest couldn't turn his head. "When you got down to it, it just seemed as if they were all dormitories," he says. "Then, when I first visited New Haven, it was a rainy, dreary day, and I thought, this must be sort of what London's like. It reminded me of Sherlock Holmes, and I wanted to be a part of that. Until last summer, when I played on the Cape, I had gotten well-paid construction jobs in the summer, so I won't have too big a loan to pay off when I leave Yale. You can do it if it matters to you."

Giamatti: "I believe a kid suffers if he's brought to any institution as an athlete. If the initial contact is athletic—especially, of course, if it involves predatory alumni—then the fundamental reason for the student to be at the university is obscured. It is so crucial to shape the primary identification with a place. We always come back to the basic question: Why give scholarships to athletes at all? To me, the business of setting up quotas—and that's exactly what athletic scholarships are, quotas—is bizarre."

Ronnie and Cathy are an item in New Haven



Giamatti was a 40-year-old professor of English and comparative literature when Yale appointed him its 19th president on Oct. 14, 1978. He has never been an athlete, but like Ronnie Darling, he is a striking man, dark, with a beard that makes him resemble Shaikh Yamani, the oil minister of Saudi Arabia, if not quite the vintage Cornel Wilde. He smokes menthol cigarettes, which he waves about when animation or mimicry are called for, and he speaks so eloquently, in long embroidered sentences, that one has the impression he isn't so much talking extemporaneously as he is reading something he had earlier jotted down in his mind.

The irony of Giamatti's being castigated for calling for a re-evaluation of college athletics is that he's a true sports fan. "All I ever wanted to be president of was the American League," he quipped when Yale tapped him. And for all the cool logic and tradition he can apply to the broad subject of sport, he speaks in an intimate, wistful way when recalling his own college days, remembering his roommates who were athletes, their returning from practice and telling him of plays and games, camaraderie and coaches. "It's not without envy that I recall those things," he says, smiling at himself.

Indeed few of us, no matter how sane, no matter how successful in non-athletic endeavors, are ever totally free of such envy. The truth is that, above all, Ronnie Darling wants to be Ronnie Darling. He chose Yale, chose to be a genuine college student, and has worked at it diligently, mingling with piano players and scholars and would-be lawyers. He's a Yale man through and through. He's even in love with a Yale senior who plans to attend law school this fall. Her name is Cathy Bui, and she's of Vietnamese descent, although she hails from Bethesda, Md.

But for all that Yale has meant to Ronnie Darling and for all that it might have changed him, he's still, foremost, a baseball player. In one way, Yale has changed nothing of him, and, that, perhaps, is all the more to Yale's credit.

Here's a vignette. Here's Ronnie Darling, in centerfield, frozen for a moment. It's the middle of February, but a freak warm-weather system has made it possible for the Yale varsity to practice out-

side on the frosted brown grass. No one can remember such a thing ever happening before. The Elis play a real intrasquad game. Ronnie Darling goes two innings on the mound, throwing about three-quarters speed. Now he's back in center, and finally, in at least some obedience to the calendar, the late-afternoon air turns chilly and misty and a cold rain begins to drift upon the winter earth. "All right," Joe Benanto, the Yale coach, cries out, "last half inning."

An irritated voice comes in from center. "Hey!" it bellows. "Last inning! Last inning!" Ronnie Darling winks his ups, and never mind that it's February and you can hardly see through the lowering clouds. "Last inning! They were up first!"

"I've never seen anybody who wanted to play baseball as much as Ronnie," Benanto says. "Two years ago, one catcher quit and the other one got hurt, and all of a sudden we didn't have a catcher. So he comes running up to me. 'Hey, Coach, I've caught before,' he says. 'Let me catch.' Him! Behind the plate!"

This passion for playing is not good, either. "He can't do everything," says Lawlor of the Phillies. "I think he got real tired in the Cape League last summer, doing everything. If he'd just DH this spring when he isn't pitching. . . ."

But Ronnie Darling can't stay in the dugout. He swears he won't have to throw that much from the outfield. And he says he has to work more on moving out there—"gliding, with my head up"—in case the team that drafts him wants him to be an outfielder.

He'd rarely pitched until Benanto turned to him as a freshman. Ronnie Darling had used his gun of an arm mostly from shortstop and center, but it appears that he's a natural on the mound. That first season at Yale, 1979, he worked mainly in relief. But in the finale Benanto started Ronnie Darling against Yale's major local rival, the University of New Haven, a perennial Division II play-off team.

As Ronnie Darling was warming up, Benanto showed him how to throw a slider. They had decided that New Haven was too good for him to beat with just his heat. By the end of the game, Ronnie Darling was using the slider as his out pitch. He won 4-1 and went the distance, the first of 15 straight complete games he has thrown.

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He can throw the slider at close to 90 mph. It's really a cut fastball, the kind Ron Guidry uses so effectively from the left side. Ronnie Darling also has learned to throw a curve, and now he's working on a changeup, too.

However, it's his mind as much as his arm that suggests he could make it big as a pitcher. Last spring, when the Yalies exhibited (as Secretary of State Haig would say) some games against minor league teams in Florida, Ronnie Darling was astonished to notice how even touted pro pitchers kept challenging him at the plate, throwing to ego, not to spots. "I've seen too many pitchers more interested in where the ball might be hit than in how they might get people out," he says.

He learned all he had to know on this subject four years ago when he sat behind home plate at Fenway Park for a game in which Jim Palmer was pitching against the Red Sox.

President Giamatti's summary assessment of his poor dear Sox: "They will acquit themselves with their customary nobility and sense of despair.... They'll do very well, and paradise will always remain just beyond us."

"The Sox must've hit 10 fly balls to the warning track in center against the O's that day," Ronnie Darling recalls. Everyone about him was babbling about Boston's bad luck, about how the Sox would surely get to Palmer, if not this inning then the next one. Darling began to understand what Palmer was up to. "I couldn't believe it," he says. "Palmer didn't throw one strike over the inside half of the plate the whole game." He was throwing away, using all the ball park. Never mind that it looked as if the Sox were pounding him. Out pitches. Ronnie Darling understands that out pitches don't have to break bats.

Yet Ronnie Darling is so strong and fast enough afoot that many teams still view him as an offensive prospect. Indeed, some clubs can't make up their minds whether he should be tried as an outfielder or sent back to short. And be-

cause he was a late developer and because spring comes late to Wasternass and New Haven, Ronnie Darling has had a relatively limited showcase, which has served to confuse scouts even more. Ronnie Darling has a suggestion on his score. "A lot of these Southern players play so much as kids that they peak while still in high school," he says. "If I were a scout, I'd keep that in mind and choose a com-

1.31—but do it back-to-back, Ivy, do it when they're watching with JUGS gun and checkbook.

Oh well, it doesn't really make that much difference, does it, Ronnie Darling? Whether you make it to the bigs or not, you'll always be a Yale man.

"No," Ronnie Darling says, shaking his head sadly. "No, I want to play. Even if I have the Yale degree, even then, if I didn't play...." His voice trails off, and he looks away for a moment.

"But never mind the degree," he continues. "If I could just make the majors! If I could play... 10 years! Imagine that! I'd be the happiest."

The best thing about Ronnie Darling's Yale education is that the book learning hasn't confused him about what he is and what he must do now with his tools. Very few of us get a chance to be a Ronnie Darling, and those lucky ones who do would be fools to let the real world interfere with what is now the spring of life.

Giamatti, writing in the *Yale Alumni Magazine* and *Journal* about the summer of his 40th year: "Whatever the reason, it seemed to me that I was investing more and more in baseball, making the game do more of the work that keeps time fat and slow and lazy.... The real activity was done with the radio—not the all-seeing, all-fall-playing television—and was the playing of the game in the only place it will last, the enclosed green field of the mind...."

"Of course, there are those... who grow out of sports. And there are others who were born with the wisdom to know that nothing lasts. These are the truly tough among us, the ones who can live without illusion, or without even the hope of illusion. I am not that grown-up or up-to-date. I am a simpler creature, tied to more primitive patterns and cycles. I need to think something lasts forever, and it might as well be that state of being that is a game, it might as well be that, in a green field, in the sun."



Giamatti's speech on the ills of collegiate sport upset many Old Blues

parable Northern player because I'd figure he could still develop."

Unfortunately, the kid can't be quite as calculating about himself. "Look," Lawlor says, "everybody knows, and I've told Ronnie, the quickest way to the majors for a college player is as a pitcher. He's crazy to play an inning in the field."

Ronnie Darling says, "I think I can make it as a pitcher, but my selfish side wants to play every day."

Some scouts remain suspicious. *What is this, Ivy League All-America?* Nobody can ever take last season away from Ronnie Darling—the .384, the 11–2, the

There's no one so shifty as Nifty

Bruin Rick Middleton, whose nickname reflects his skills, is a one-man attack

The great ones often have nicknames. Apt little catchphrases that suggest a special skill or style. Bernie Geoffrion had a thunderous slap shot, so he became Boom-Boom. For getting up and down the ice but fast, Maurice Richard probably had no peer, thus The Rocket. Bobby Hull had blond locks and skated like the wind, ergo The Golden Jet. To watch Montreal's Guy Lafleur is to behold a thing of beauty, so, translating his surname, he's The Flower.

And then there's Rick Middleton. His Boston Bruin teammates call him Nifty. Why? Forward Keith Crowder answers, "Just watch him."

Defenseman Brad Park, a five-time All-Star who is now in his 14th NHL season, says, "I've seen them all, and Nifty's the best one-on-one player in hockey. Take anyone in the league, give Nifty the puck, and 90% of the time he'll turn the other guy inside out."

Combining superb quickness and stickhandling with unusual balance and instinct, Middleton, a forward, not only is one of the league's most stylish players, but also is emerging, in his seventh season, as a scorer. Last year he had a team-high 92 points on 40 goals and 52 assists. With two weeks remaining this season, Middleton had already surpassed those totals. After the Bruins' 4-3 victory over Calgary on Saturday, he had a career-high 42 goals and 55 assists, tying him for eighth in the league in scoring.

Middleton logs more ice time than any Bruin except defensemen Park and Ray Bourque. He works the power play, kills penalties and protects late leads. The opposition keys on Middleton, too, because he's Boston's only genuine threat to "create" a goal; for the most part the other Bruins qualify as muckers, members of the so-called Lunchpail A.C., who score on

goal-mouth tip-ins, rebounds or unintentional deflections.

"Boston's what you'd call a backward team, the only one in the league," says one NHL coach. "Except for Middleton, the Bruins get almost no offense from their forwards. Except for Middleton, the Bruins get their offense from the defense. It should be the other way around."

Middleton doesn't stand out on the ice, at least not right away. He doesn't have

the breakaway speed of Lafleur, Buffalo's Gilbert Perreault or Los Angeles' Marcel Dionne. Nor does he have the quick, no-look release of the Islanders' Mike Bossy. Instead, he weaves effortlessly, economically about the ice. It's those tiny moves that set Middleton apart. A leg fake here, a shoulder dip there, maybe even the twitch of an eyelid, and suddenly Nifty has the puck and is off.

"It's no great secret," Middleton says. "You don't have to fly up and down the rink to be effective. You just go with the flow, wait for an opening and then you pounce." Of course, Middleton is fully capable of making an opening or two himself. Jim Craig, the U.S. Olympic hero who's now Boston's No. 3 goaltender, says that of all the scorers he has faced, Middleton's the most talented at giving the puck, taking it away and then sliding it into the net—right between the goalie's legs.

To get to the bottom of Middleton's success, one must search all the way down to his skates. The blades on most players' skates are fastened to the boot with steel rivets. Because the shifty Middleton seems to skate on his ankles half the time, his blades are attached with more durable copper studs. Bruin Trainer Dan Canney says that without the copper studs Middleton would "be popping his skates off all night." In his 18 years on the job, Canney has met only one other player who required copper studs, Bobby Orr.

At times Middleton can be simply spectacular. His sliding-face-down-by-the-goal-mouth-arms-fully-extended-goal-from-an-impossible-angle during the Stanley Cup playoffs two seasons back would make the all-time NHL highlight film. And then there was the score against Toronto earlier that same year. Middleton was on



Since January, Middleton has more goals than anyone but Gretzky.

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When he's around their net, foes are frequently nasty to Nifty

HOCKEY continued

a breakaway, at midice on the right side. A step behind, angling in on him from the left, was Lanny McDonald, then of the Maple Leafs. At the blue line McDonald realized he couldn't get close enough to Middleton to do any formal checking, so he dived face down across Middleton's path. Just a wink before McDonald touched ice, Middleton, who was ripping along at about 25 mph, backhanded the puck under McDonald's belly. An instant later he hurtled over McDonald, gathered in the sliding puck and snapped a wrist shot past Goal-tender Mike Palmateer.

Middleton stands 5'11" and weighs a lumpy 170 pounds. He has a thick eyebrow that extends across his forehead, puffy eyes and thinning blond hair, all of which make him look far older than his 27 years. Maybe there's a reason. In 1973, after being named the MVP of the amateur Ontario Hockey Association, Middleton was drafted

in the first round by the Rangers. In 1973-74 he played for New York's farm club in Providence and was selected Rookie of the Year in the American Hockey League. The following season he was called up by the Rangers. Everything should have been terrific, but then the roof caved in.

As an NHL rookie, Middleton scored 22 goals, but he lost a few teeth and broke his left leg, which caused him to miss 33 games. Next year was worse. Early in the 1975-76 season New York acquired Phil Esposito from Boston, where he had rewritten the NHL goal-scoring records. Shortly thereafter New York fired General Manager Emile Francis and Coach Ron Stewart and replaced them with former Montreal tough guy John Ferguson. The Rangers finished with a 29-42-9 record and failed to make the playoffs. Middleton was miserable, and so was Esposito, who figured

New York's major shortcoming was the lack of a brawny wing who could dig the puck out of the corners for him, as Wayne Cashman and Ken Hodge had done in Boston. He had a solution—get Hodge.

The deal was struck in May of 1976: Hodge for Middleton. It was rumored that the Ranger hierarchy had soured on Middleton because he was thought to be a "bad liver" off the ice. "I kept wondering if New York wanted to get rid of me, or if Boston really wanted me," Middleton says. "I found out only recently that the Bruins did want me."

Thus will be Middleton's third consecutive season as the Bruins' top scorer. Hodge had a so-so year in New York and another in the minors before dropping out of hockey. Says one NHL official, "It was a typical Ranger trade. Awful."

But Nifty was no overnight sensation in Boston. "My job had always been to go to the net, to score," he says. "Before I came to the Bruins, if anybody ever told me to cover some player on the oth-

er team, I honestly don't remember it." Middleton's passive style hardly endeared him to Don Cherry, the then Boston coach, who believes hockey games are decided in the corners.

Middleton struggled through the 1976-77 season and part of the next. First he was a fourth-line right wing, and then he was switched to the left side. At times he was supposed to cover the third opposing player to enter the Boston zone. Other times his man was the big scoring threat. Mainly, Middleton was confused. Once in Buffalo, he stormed after high-scoring Danny Gare, who he figured was the man to cover on a Sabre breakaway. Gare passed the puck around Middleton to low-scoring Defenseman Bill Hagt, who was precisely where Cherry thought Middleton ought to have been. Hagt scored. Cherry yanked Middleton off the ice and shouted in his face. Middleton and Peter McNab, roommates at the time, used to lose a lot of sleep because of Cherry. One would ask the other, "What does the man want?"

Midway through the 1977-78 season Middleton found out. "It came step by step," he says. "Suddenly, late in tight games I was still on the ice. I got a whiff of confidence. I started to see how playing defense really does lead into playing offense. It's weird, but checking makes things happen. It opens up the ice. You get passes at the blue line, not at the circle." Middleton finished that season with 25 goals and 35 assists—and hasn't stopped scoring since.

As Middleton goes, so go the Bruins. This season each got off to a terrible start. The Bruins won just three of their first 15 games and none of their first six on the road. In early January Middleton had only 15 goals, and Boston was in 14th place in the 21-team standings with a 13-10-7 record. Since then, Middleton has scored 27 goals—more than anybody in the NHL during that span except Edmonton's Wayne Gretzky. Six of those goals have been game winners. During Middleton's streak the Bruins have gone 21-17-5 and are skate to skate with Minnesota for the eighth and final home-ice advantage playoff spot; the Bruins and North Stars seem certain to meet in the opening round.

"Hockey's a game of streaks," Middleton says. "We're not quite at our peak yet, but I think we're pretty close."

So are the playoffs. Nifty and the Bruins bear watching.

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Lanier (left) and friends vie the team treatment to screen Tyler Earl Cureton

in the league. But the facts are that Johnson, phenomenal as he may be, is scoring fewer than 21 points a game. Lanier remains in one piece. Bridgeman is still the sixth man, and had it not been for injuries to starting Guard Brian Winters, Moncrief would be the seventh. But that's the beauty of the Bucks; what is the case, instead of what could be, is precisely why Milwaukee ran off with the Central Division and now has the league's third-best record.

The Bucks were the first NBA team to clinch a division title, which they did way back on March 5, and through last Sunday they held a whopping 15-game lead over Indiana and Chicago, which were tied for second place. Along the way Milwaukee has amassed the second-best road record in the league. After beating the Pistons 104-86 in Detroit and the Nets 125-116 in New Jersey

last week, the Bucks had won 25 away games and lost but 15.

In fact, the only remaining could-about these Bucks is that they could win the NBA championship, though right now Milwaukee mainly elicits yawns from a public fed a constant diet of Philadelphia, Boston and Los Angeles. Not having a star of the magnitude of Julius Erving, Larry Bird or Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, Milwaukee is, perforce, the paradigm of team play. This is best exemplified by Johnson. He can score almost at will—his high this season is 40 points—but he clearly chooses to blend his skills with those of his teammates. In addition to leading Milwaukee's balanced scoring, Johnson ranks second on the club in both assists and steals and is the top offensive rebounder.

The other Bucks also perform diverse roles. For example, Quinn Buckner, the

team leader in steals, is the designated ball handler and playmaker, but he has developed an accurate jump shot to go with his strong floor game and is having his best season offensively, averaging 13.3 points a game, with a high of 31. Former Pacer Mickey Johnson, a strong rebounder, takes a bigger part in the offense than the man he replaced, Dave Meyers, who abruptly retired for religious reasons after last season.

That seven Milwaukee players are scoring in double figures with only two playing more than 30 minutes a game indicates the Bucks' depth. When Marques Johnson was sidelined for a few days by the flu earlier this month, Bridgeman came in to score 34 points in one game, and Pat Cummings chipped in with 30 in another. "You bring people like Winters and Bridgeman off the bench against a team's second string and they'll destroy it," says Dallas Coach Dick Motta. "The Bucks have such quality, from one through 11, that they could definitely win it all."

Milwaukee's team approach reflects the philosophy of Coach Don Nelson, who spent most of his 14 playing seasons in Boston where he was a member of five championship teams. His Bucks resemble those Celtics, pressuring opponents on offense with a fast-breaking, hurry-up attack and on defense with what is probably the best-disguised 2-3 zone in the league. Nelson came to Milwaukee 16 games into the 1976-77 season. "We were probably the worst team in the league back then," he says, "but Fitz [the Bucks' principal owner James Fitzgerald] had faith in me, and we worked out a five-year plan to get where we wanted to be."

The cornerstone of Nelson's five-year plan, building through the draft, was such a success—producing, among others, Marques Johnson and Moncrief—that by the start of last season it was thought that all Milwaukee needed to make a run at the championship was a dominating center. That shortcoming was remedied right after last season's All-Star break when the Bucks traded Kent Benson and their 1980 first-round draft choice to the

Bucking for a title

Milwaukee easily won a division crown, but the Bucks don't want to stop there

In NBA circles, when the Milwaukee Bucks are discussed—if they are discussed at all—the most frequently used word is *could*. As in: Marques Johnson *could* score 30 points a night; or, Bob Lanier's knees *could* collapse at any moment; or, Sidney Moncrief and Junior Bridgeman *could* start for any other team

continued

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Pistons for Lanier. Milwaukee was 29-27 at the time, but with Lanier they went 20-6 for the remainder of the regular season before losing a tense seven-game playoff series to defending champion Seattle. Without Lanier, Detroit won two of its last 28 games.

Milwaukee has continued at that pace in 1980-81 despite what has been a depressing season for Lanier. In October his father was killed by a hit-and-run driver, and recently his wife filed for divorce. On the court Lanier, 32, has endured a broken nose, pain in his shoulders, neck and back, and floating bone chips in his left knee. At least five times this season the knee has locked.

"I guess you could say this hasn't been one of the grandest years of my life," says Lanier. "I've struggled, and there has been a lot of unrest in my mind—right now because of the knee. Some days I can play, some days I can't."

When he does play, Lanier still has his feathery touch from the outside. On the inside he's still 6'10", 250 pounds, which means he takes up a lot of room in the lane.

Nelson has sometimes held Lanier out of entire games to rest the knee. When he's not in the lineup, the Bucks seem to rise to the occasion—witness a 113-103 win over Boston on Feb. 5—but Nelson

and everyone else know that a reasonably healthy Lanier is essential if Milwaukee is to seriously challenge for the NBA title. So, with Lanier's knee continuing to give him problems, Nelson has of late tried reducing the strain on it by limiting Lanier's playing time to short spurts. Lanier, however, balks at that treatment, saying he needs more playing time to loosen up the knee, which stiffens during rest periods on the bench. "People have started to dismiss us because they don't think Bob will be able to go full speed in the playoffs," says Nelson, "but I know he'll be tough." Says Lanier, "I haven't had the opportunity to get my game on track this year with all that's gone on, but my teammates have carried me. I'm not where I want to be yet, but if I can get there, I'll be doing the carrying."

Lanier has played in the NBA for 11 seasons but never made it to the championship series. Now he feels he may finally get there. "What makes this year so important to me is that I've had a full season with a good team," he says. "I know the system and I know the players. And, for me, there's no promise that there'll be a next year."

Marques Johnson is optimistic about the playoffs, but he's well aware that Lanier's soundness is crucial to Milwaukee's hopes. "Our strength is our flexibility,"

he says. "Whatever matchup we meet, we have a lineup to counter it. That Seattle series last year and the experience of taking the Sonics to seven games is our biggest plus. Not having handled that kind of pressure before was our downfall then. What I remember most is the Sonics' saying that it was their experience that helped them win. Now I guess you could say we're an experienced club. But without Bob we're not strong inside, and teams like Philadelphia, Boston and Chicago can take advantage of us on the boards."

Much of the Bucks' flexibility comes from the versatility of Moncrief, a sleek second-year guard from Arkansas, who averaged only about 20 minutes of action as a rookie. This season he got a chance to start when a sore neck, sore legs and other hurts took Winters out of the lineup on Nov. 23. Now Moncrief is second only to Marques Johnson in minutes played, is scoring about 14 points a game and has done such a good all-round job that Nelson, who had planned to start Winters in the playoffs, has apparently changed his mind.

Moncrief, 6'4" and blessed with astonishing leaping ability, often does the unexpected, especially on defense, where he slithers inside to block shots and crash the boards. He's the Bucks' leading back-court rebounder. He's also quite capable of doing a little improvisation on offense. Last month against Dallas, Moncrief was floating to the basket, arms and legs extended, for what appeared to be an easy layup when he was met in mid-flight by the Mavericks' hulking 6'10", 230-pound Scott Lloyd. Undaunted, Moncrief curled up, executed a 180-degree turn, softly bounced the ball off the backboard, gathered it in again and scored, while Lloyd and everyone else on the court tried to fathom just what had happened.

Such spontaneous moves come easily to Moncrief, yet there was a time last season when he tried to harness his creativity. "I always felt that if I tried something like that shot, I'd be pulled out of the game," he says. "Now I know that Nellie isn't like that, so I don't hold back. I'm not as good as I can be yet, but in a couple of years..."

In a couple of years everyone but the Bucks may be wishing that Moncrief had stayed in Little Rock, which was a distinct possibility because he's a retiring sort who insists he didn't even think about playing pro ball until after he was



Moncrief moved into a starting guard spot when Winters got hurt and he refused to be moved out

drafted by Milwaukee. "I never had any grand notions about being a pro," he says. "When I was a kid we never saw basketball on television, so there were no Wilts or Clydes or Dr. Js for me to want to grow up and be like. Football was the big thing. When other children were getting bikes and trains and other toys, I was getting little, cheap footballs."

That wasn't quite the case with Bridgeman, Moncrief's best friend on the Bucks. Junior grew up in basketball-crazy Indiana, where the pinnacle of success was being good enough to make the local high school team. At Washington High in East Chicago, Ind., Bridgeman played with future college stars Pete Trgovich of UCLA and Tim Stoddard of North Carolina State, now a relief pitcher with the Baltimore Orioles. In their senior year Washington was undefeated and won the state championship. "Winning that title was such a big thing that none of us wanted to go to college," says Bridgeman. "We didn't see how playing ball there could ever be as good." Nevertheless, Bridgeman went on to Louisville where he made some All-America teams before being drafted by the Lakers in the first round in 1975. He came to Milwaukee that summer as part of the trade for Abdul-Jabbar.

Bridgeman and Philadelphia's Bobby Jones are now recognized as the league's best sixth men, but Bridgeman has the edge on offense. His 16.9 average is second on the club to Marques Johnson's 20.3, and his ability to play both guard and forward causes mismatches with opponents who are either smaller or slower. As a result Bridgeman often winds up at the free-throw line, where his 83.9 shooting percentage is fourth-best in the league.

An aspiring lawyer—he attends the University of Wisconsin-Madison law school in the off-season—Bridgeman got his undergraduate degree in psychology, which has helped him adjust to coming off the bench. "You figure that a player couldn't get this far without a certain amount of ego and pride," he says. "Ninety percent of the players were the main man in college and want to continue to be the star in the pros. I was like that, too, but I've learned that starting isn't as important as doing something with the time you get and contributing to the team."

That's a lesson all the Bucks seem to have learned.

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New boy on an old block

Led by Coach Willie Scroggs, upstart North Carolina is about to crash—and perhaps crush—the sport's elite



There's no reason in the world why the University of North Carolina should be any good at lacrosse. Or even that it should want to be. After all, high school lacrosse isn't played in the state, so all Tar Heel players must be recruited a long way from home—primarily from the Baltimore area and New York's Long Island, which are the sport's hotbeds. If pressured, most sports fans in the Carolinas would be hard pressed to say whether lacrosse is something burned on lawns by the Klan or a town in Wisconsin.

Yet last week, like the budding dogwoods on the Chapel Hill campus, the North Carolina lacrosse team looked ready—only three years after a player revolt left the program in ruins—to burst into full flower. "We have some talent," deadpanned Coach Willie Scroggs.

Indeed, the Tar Heels very likely have the most talent in the nation in a sport played by about 130 colleges but dominated by a few—Johns Hopkins, Maryland, Navy, Virginia and Cornell. The interloping Tar Heels not only are horn-ing in on this clubby little quintet but are also threatening to march right over them. Henry Caccaro, the coach at Johns Hopkins, which has been national champ 40 times, including the last three years in a row, says gloomily, "Carolina has more ability than we do, so that puts them in position to beat us."

And maybe everybody else. Already this season, North Carolina has whipped Navy 11-8 and the 1980 NCAA runner-up, Virginia, 11-6. Then last Saturday the Heels showed an explosive and well-disciplined attack in overwhelming Towson State 19-3. A crucial game for North Carolina comes April 4 when it plays Maryland, which has defeated the Tar Heels all 17 times they have met. Should North Carolina finally win—and the Terps are down from their once lofty heights—then notice will have been served that there's a new boy on the old block. Further proof may well come at the NCAA championship in Princeton at the end of May.

That's not bad for a college that didn't take up the game until 1964, and did it then mainly to earn points that would enable it to win the Carmichael Cup, the ACC's all-sports trophy. The play worked—sort of. In the last 17 years, Carolina has won the cup nine times, but hardly because of its lacrosse prowess.

Most of the credit for North Carolina's sudden prominence in the sport goes to Scroggs, 33, who has the perfect tem-

perament to coach lacrosse at a school where basketball and football have long shared kingship: he will not allow himself to feel insulted, demeaned, put-upon or otherwise trampled in spirit.

He's the classic example of someone who gets along by going along. Scroggs was hired in July 1978 after a disastrous season that included an ugly set-to in which 14 players were suspended by the then coach, Paul Doty. The players said Doty was a loosey coach, and Doty said he wasn't real crazy about the players. Against this backdrop, Scroggs was told, among other things, that lacrosse definitely wouldn't be as important in Chapel Hill as it was at Johns Hopkins, where Scroggs had played and then had served as an assistant coach for six years. Fine, he said. When auto dealers gave all the rest of the Tar Heel head coaches big new cars to use, Scroggs got a two-door Honda. Fine, he said. You'll have to share the practice field with the track team. Scroggs was told. Fine, he said. You have 13 scholarships now but we're dropping it steadily down to nine, Scroggs was told. Fine, he said. Your office is being moved over to oblivion in the women's facility to make room for somebody more important. Fine, he said.

Scroggs was also told money would always be a problem so don't ask. Fine, he said. He then went about making a deal for his 41-member squad to clean up Kenan Stadium after four of last fall's home football games for \$3,600. "I liked doing it," says Scroggs, "because it demonstrated that we're not afraid to work for what we want. It was tough. I liked that. To be in a filthy football stadium at 6 a.m. on Sunday in the rain is special. I think the kids gained by suffering."

So the players liked it, too?

"No, they hated it," says Scroggs.

But with the money they bought shoes, turtle-necks, jackets. They probably will clean up again next fall and put the money toward a trip to Colorado to play the Air Force Academy. Goalie Tom Sears, one of the nation's best at the position, says, "What's so hard about cleaning up a stadium?" Nothing, really, although

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Scroggs admits that he thinks watching the procedure scared off one of the nation's top recruits this year. "I don't think he wanted to come to college to pick up garbage," Scroggs says sadly.

And Scroggs was told that because being lacrosse coach wasn't considered a full-time job, he'd also have to be in charge of game operations for North Carolina's football and basketball games. Fine, he said. Thus, he looks after all arrangements, including ticket-taking, security, motor vehicles ("In this capacity, I learned not to get emotionally involved with a van"), fire protection, everything. He also takes the lacrosse jerseys home after every game and washes them, partly to get them done the way he wants and partly to prevent workers at the university laundry from swiping them and raising further havoc with his budget. "It's not hard," he says, "so why complain?"

Here's a measure of where Scroggs and lacrosse fit in the hearts and minds of the North Carolina public: it's estimated that Tar Heel Basketball Coach Dean Smith took in more than \$300,000 from his summer basketball camps last year; Scroggs made \$67 on his lacrosse camp.

Gee, isn't all this terribly demeaning? "It could be if I'd let it," Scroggs says. "But it's my job, so I do it to the best of my ability and I do it cheerfully."

Scroggs doesn't merely recruit in Maryland and on Long Island; he raids the places—cheerfully, of course. In 1979, a Baltimore newspaper named 12 All-Metro lacrosse players; Scroggs got six of them to go to North Carolina. Last spring's Baltimore area Player of the Year, Andy Smith of Annapolis, was snaggged by Scroggs. Scroggs can do this because he was born, raised and educated in Baltimore, and even today you can look in his eyes and see row houses. First, he knows everybody connected with lacrosse in Baltimore—and darn near everyone involved on Long Island, too. Second, he uses the many attractions of Chapel Hill to entice young men from the North. He tells them, for example, that often in the spring they will practice on Wednesday nights because the track team needs the field that day. But more important, he points out that the spectacle of coeds jogging around the field in the afternoon is so distracting that it's more efficient to practice at night anyway. That's something boys understand.

Scroggs also succeeds because he's a born scuffer. His father was a Baltimore



Greville Sears hides up around the net in the spring and cleans up the football stadium in the fall.

city policeman, his grandfather a boxer who fought under the name of Handsome Harry Scroggs. When Willie announced to his mother that he wanted to go to college, she was furious, because she wanted him to get a job. When he persisted in this college nonsense, she insisted that from then on he pay rent to live in her house. He did, raising the money by parking cars at Oriole baseball games, working as a guinea pig for psychology-department experiments (he made \$7 taking a nonsense syllable test), stuffing envelopes and playing poker. In exchange for sweeping up in a barber shop, he got free haircuts.

This background colored everything Scroggs did in those days—and does now. At 5'9", 165 pounds, he was captain and defensive back on the Hopkins football team, but he was never, as is now sometimes written, an All-America in lacrosse. A midfielder, he excelled on defense and at picking up ground balls, two of the game's least glamorous skills. "Around here we place big emphasis on kids' trying," says Scroggs. "Everybody wants to play. We are looking for guys who want to practice." Not long ago he told one disgruntled athlete, "Your role is to really help us in practice, and if you can accept that, we'll be a better team."

Bill Cobey, the former North Carolina athletic director who hired Scroggs, says, "He can turn a negative into a positive overnight." The Scroggs method:

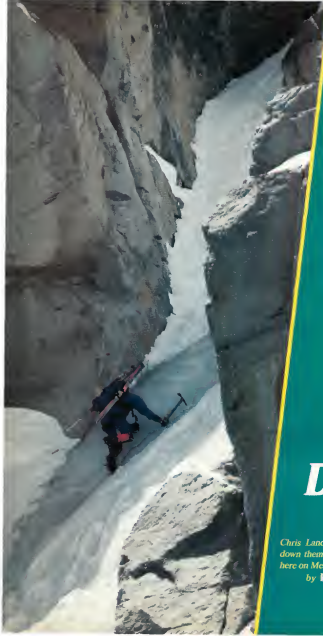
when an assistant coach complained about a player during the 1979 season, saying, "This guy is terrible," Scroggs retorted, "Well, let's teach him."

And Scroggs does teach. He's a team man. The players understand. "I never get scored on," says Sears. "The whole team gets scored on. I'm just the last person the ball goes by." Against Towson, Sears was his usual brilliant self, getting 18 saves, several of them spectacular. Two Tar Heel attackmen, Chris Mueller, a little-used sub, and Kevin Griswold, North Carolina's only certified star, scored three goals each in the romp that saw Towson dead and gone midway through the first quarter. "We're up and coming," says Griswold, an All-America last season, "but we haven't proven ourselves yet."

Last year North Carolina made it to the NCAA semifinals before losing 11-10 in double overtime to Virginia, but as the Heels' 8-4 record indicated, they weren't consistently good. "Consistency gives you confidence, and by God, with confidence you can do anything," says Scroggs. "So what I set out to do is establish a program so consistently good that it would be hard for the university to get rid of us."

That would be fine with the current athletic director, John Swofford, who marvels, "Willie has raised our realization of how good we can be in lacrosse." Fine, Scroggs would say.

END



IT'S GOT ITS UPS AND DOWNS

Chris Landry climbs mountains just to ski down them, at times on 60-degree slopes, as here on Mendel Couloir in the Sierra Nevadas
by **WILLIAM OSCAR JOHNSON**



EXTREME SKIING

continued

The definition of extreme skiing is pretty simple—if you fall, you die

—CHRISTOPHER CAMERON LANDRY
Extreme Skier

The first time Chris Landry faced such an absurd and ultimate extremity was early on the morning of Mother's Day 1978. He stood alone on the 14,018-foot summit of Colorado's Pyramid Peak, which rises roughly six rugged backcountry miles from Aspen. A spring sunrise had laid a clean copper light over the peaks visible at every compass point around Pyramid. It was a perfect day for the Moms of America. It was a little less than perfect for an extreme skier.

"The sun was the problem," recalls Landry. "It was only 8:30, but it was getting warm already. It was going to be a race to get down before the snow



Atop Pyramid Peak, Landry pauses before preparing for the plunge

warmed up into avalanche conditions."

A descent on skis down the East Face of Pyramid Peak was something no man had ever attempted. The patches were horrendous, more than 50 degrees in some places, at least 45 degrees over the upper half of the 4,300 feet to the base of the face. To put these angles of incline into perspective, only a few of the steepest expert runs at U.S. ski areas exceed an average of 30 degrees. The steepest average grade available to non-extreme skiers is the 35.9-degree pitch down the 4,875-foot Christmas Bowl in Sun Valley. Occasional sections of a few ski-area runs are steeper, but none exceeds 40 degrees. Veteran mountain climbers say that going up a rock face pitched at 60 degrees gives them the sensation that they are going straight up, while a true 90-degree ascent gives a climber the impression he is in a backward tilt on an overhang.

The first 300 feet of Landry's long trip down Pyramid seemed the most

treacherous. The moment he tipped his skis off the summit, he would plunge along a narrow neck of snow, scarcely 20 feet wide, that dropped away at an angle close to 55 degrees and ended at the brink of a 400-foot-high cliff. Landry hoped to cut a series of very cautious turns, perhaps a half dozen of them, down that chute until he reached a safe point above the cliff, then to glide in a traverse along the edge of the drop-off until he reached a broader patch on which he would make the rest of the descent.

"Since it was my first time, there were things I didn't know for sure," he says. "I didn't know, for example, precisely what would happen on snow that steep when I hit it with my ski edges. I wasn't really fear-

ful. I was really paying attention to everything, but I didn't have any butterflies that morning. My butterflies had come in the dark on the way up."

Yes, don't forget the way up. One thing axiomatic about this dangerous game is that for a man to be an extreme mountain skier, he must also be a fairly extreme mountain climber. Thus, for Landry to perch in a position to descend the East Face of Pyramid, he first had to ascend same. That was accomplished over five dark and eerie hours before this Mother's Day dawn. With Landry was his longtime climbing and ski-mountaineering companion, Michael Kennedy.

There had been a certain sense of hurry to their expedition from the start because Landry's decision to try to ski the mountain had been made only the afternoon of the day before. "It wasn't as if I had just stumbled on the idea of doing it then," he says. "In the back of my mind I had been preparing myself all spring. I





Landry ascends Liberty Ridge on Mt. Rainier.

had this checklist going to cover all the essential elements I would need to make a try. I was in good physical condition; I was skiing really well; I had recently done a lot of ski mountaineering. The one element that I wasn't sure of was the mountain itself. Would the snow be good enough? As the spring went by, there was more and more snow and conditions had to be better and better. Pretty soon, the idea of skiing the East Face was right up there in the front of my mind."

The morning before he stood on Pyramid Peak, Landry and some ski-mountaineering friends, including Kennedy, had made a predawn climb up Mt. Daly, which lies 15 miles west of Pyramid Peak. In the sunrise on the top of Daly, they enjoyed a vista that included a shoulder of Pyramid's summit. "There had been storms for several days before," says Landry. "From what I could see, the snow over there looked good." They skied all morning on Daly in spectacular corn snow, then went down at noon, drove back to Aspen and, by four o'clock, Landry and Kennedy were hiking out the Maroon Lake road on the way to the base of Pyramid Peak. By 8 p.m. they had made camp and had a pot of rice going on the fire but were so tired they fell asleep while it was cooking and woke two hours later to choke down some very dry, hard rice.

At 2 a.m. the alarm clock woke them. They packed and drank tea, and within the hour began to climb through the chill, silent night. Landry toted his skis on his back. Kennedy carried none, as he was going to descend on foot. Steadily, patiently, they worked their way upward, lighting the way with the bobbing beams of head lamps. The snow was hard from the low night temperatures, so they carried ice axes and wore crampons to bite into the steep, slippery surface.

The first third of the climb was up a patch strewn with avalanche debris—tumbled blocks of ice and snow and rock that had been flung like pebbles down the same precipitous inclines that Landry proposed to ski. In the beams of their head lamps, the acres of debris became a weird and unearthly landscape full of moving shadows and strange shapes.

Here is where Landry's night butterflies began to flutter. "It got to me," he says. "There is an infinite va- *continued*

Then Landry descends, passing outcrops of volcanic rock as he skis down a 50-degree slope.



EXTREME SKIING

Continued

riety of scenarios you can create to scare yourself. 'Avalanche dreams.' I call them. And there was lots of time to build up all kinds of fear and loathing during the climb up. There is a big difference between nervous anxiety and good healthy fear. The fear is good for you; it sharpens you. Anxiety can weaken you. I guess I was being sharpened all the way up."

As they climbed, they scrutinized the snow conditions and inspected the slopes that Landry would be skiing down. "The more I saw of the route, the more I was sure it would be skiable," Landry says.

But not all of it. After more than three hours of climbing, they came to a gully that had been concealed from view. Landry had hoped that the gully would contain snow and would be wide enough to ski. But he and Kennedy were stunned to see that it contained a tunnel of solid ice just eight feet wide and 150 feet long. It was a very technical (meaning difficult) ice climb that would require absolute precision and perfect technique. This wouldn't be an insuperable problem, even in the predawn dim light, for such accomplished climbers as Landry and Kennedy. However, it meant that during his descent Landry would certainly not be able to ski this ribbon of ice. He would have to remove his skis and ski boots, put on his climbing boots, with front-pointing crampons, take out his ice ax and then, with his skis on his back, make his way down the ice. It was, Landry recalls, "a grim prospect."

They ascended the ice tunnel and continued their climb to the top under a brightening sky. It had become a race to get there before the sun could soften and thicken the snow to a texture that might break off in slabs and set off avalanches. "There was a definite sense of urgency," says Landry.

On the summit they rested briefly. Then Landry put on his ski boots and skis. Surprisingly, he uses fairly ordinary equipment—on this trip, a pair of 207-cm. Rossignol ST skis, 52-inch Kerna poles, a pair of 4-year-old Dynafit boots



Ever in search of new and steeper slopes, Landry skis off into the Raitier mists.

and M4-15 Marker bindings with an FD heel. Landry points out that the stress he puts on his equipment during a couple of hours on an extreme descent is actually less than what a truly hot skier would put on his equipment during an afternoon on Aspen's Ajax Mountain. "Obviously, I ski much less wildly on an extreme slope," he says. "My life is at stake. That isn't the case when I'm skiing for fun."

Kennedy left the summit minutes after their arrival, carrying Landry's climbing gear in his pack. Ahead of him was the tedious climb down—three hours of it—over the same terrain they had just ascended. Says Kennedy, "I was just too gripped to stand there and watch Chris go off the summit."

Landry stood alone in the morning silence, studying the first critical portion of his descent. It was a section that they hadn't climbed, so it was an unknown quantity. "The snow cover looked as if it were probably good," says Landry. "I didn't know if it was rotten on the edges of the trough, but I had a fairly good idea that it would be all right."

He paused for a minute or two and, feeling a bit sleepy, washed his face with snow to bring himself to full attention. Then he went off the top. He let his skis sideslip for a few feet. The uncertain condition of the snow meant that if he set his edges hard, as one might ordinarily do in turning on a pitch so steep, he might break through the crust. That could upset him and send him outward and down the incline into a helpless

slide over the cliff ledge.

Instead of cranking through a series of linked turns down the narrow chute, he slowly let his skis slide into a turn near one side of the neck, let them glide to a stop at the opposite gully wall, then slid backward across to the other side, and then downward into the fall line for another slow and careful turn. "I had to backslide after each turn because it was just too steep to do a lock turn," he says.

He gingerly made six of these turns, the last a bare 10 feet above the cliff's brink. Then he

skied to the left along the ledge in a tense traverse that ultimately put him in the middle of a broader couloir that sank away at a mere 45-degree angle. Now euphoria engulfed him. "It had all been pretty scary up till then," he says, "but when I finally stopped, I really felt a rush. Mike was standing nearby watching and we said a couple of words. I felt great at that point, but I didn't want to lose my concentration. It wasn't time to celebrate."

The night crust on the snow was deteriorating steadily. Landry, beginning a cautious series of turns down the face, found that he could do only four or five turns in a sequence of slow links before the sloughing snow he cut loose with his edges had built up so much that it threatened to knock him down. At times the snow whirled up over his skis so turbulently that he had a feeling of vertigo.

"It wasn't really frightening," says Landry, "more a sensation of pleasant disorientation, like being a little high. But at times there were slabs breaking loose that were big enough to knock me off the mountain. One slough did almost knock me down, but I managed to push myself back up with one hand."

He had to ski back and forth across the troughs scoured out by the sluicing snow, waiting on one side as the slough slid past, then executing a few more turns until sliding snow built up again and he had to wait for it to pass. At the end of this couloir was another sheer cliff drop of 200 feet. Had Landry been swept

Continued

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DIESEL V6
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mpg

EXTREME SKIING

continued

off his feet by snowslides or knocked down after striking an unseen rock, he would have begun to slip across the snow surface at an increasingly swift rate. Then he would have begun tumbling. In short jolting bumps and bounds, then in an increasingly long and brutal series of arcs and impacts—down, down the incline until he sailed over the cliff face and wound up perhaps 1,000 feet below.

Landry didn't fall. He continued his steady way down the East Face, turning back and forth across the couloir with its treacherous thawing snow. Kennedy continued to back his way down the steep pitch, front-pointing with his crampons and punching for purchase with his own ice ax and Landry's. A fall for him would be scarcely less catastrophic than for Landry. Kennedy dropped Landry's gear off at the top of the ice runnel before he climbed down. Landry arrived a short time later. He had been skiing about half an hour. He quickly changed into his crampon-equipped climbing boots, then stowed his ski boots in his pack and strapped his skis across his back. He then moved down the runnel on a series of delicately planted ice-ax blows and crampon kicks—a piece of classic alpinism. At the bottom of the gully, he went to the side of the ice ribbon to change to ski gear again. He had just taken off one climbing boot when he heard an ominous hissing sound above him. A "medium-sized" snowslide scoured the runnel where Landry had been only moments before. He sat there, one boot on, one boot off, and watched as a couple of tons of snow shot past him. Had he been on the ice, he would have been swept away.

The rest of the way down was what could be called routinely dangerous for Landry. It included working his way over and around and down through the steep and formerly spooky terrain of avalanche debris on the lower third of the face. But all major thrills and fights were past, and by 10 a.m., Landry and Kennedy were back at the camp they had left seven hours before.

Chris Landry still retains a

sense of wonder and elation over making the first ski descent of Pyramid Peak. "I'm still shocked by it," he says. "It was particularly gripping because it was the first time I'd ever really skied something where, if I fell, I died. I wonder sometimes—like anyone—exactly what I was doing there. I suppose that the idea of a death wish has validity for some people, but not with me. I know this isn't a game you can play indefinitely. There's an odds factor. Some people see it as some kind of a sudden heroic, daredevil act. Nothing was sudden, nothing was heroic. It was all part of a very gradual, very logical progression in myself.

"A few years ago I thought of dabbling in extreme skiing, but I really didn't like the idea much. I thought, 'Why turn skiing into a death-defying deal when it's so much fun?' Even downhill racing—you might get banged up bad, but you almost never worried about getting killed. But as time went on and I got into more ski mountaineering, I kind of unconsciously upped the ante. Gradually I got

into steeper and steeper stuff. By the time I got up on Pyramid, it was all just part of the logic."

If extreme skiing has a logic, it has so far appealed to very few. Indeed, only a handful of men are even remotely capable of doing it. Yet the sport has a stirring history, albeit a brief one, with a tiny pantheon of living heroes as well as an inevitable collection of obituaries.

The beginnings of extreme skiing can be traced back 80 or 90 years, when mountaineers got involved in what the French call "ski de raid," which referred to ski traverses of the great ranges of the Alps. By the end of World War I, nearly all of the main summits in the Alps had been reached on skis. These feats probably involved descents somewhat less harrowing than those accomplished by extreme skiers today, but they still required mighty reserves of skill and courage, especially on the relatively primitive ski equipment then available. In the 1920s and 1930s, the French led in the development of ski alpinism. A legendary

French mountain man named André Tournier skied, for the first time, the glacier of the Aiguille d'Argentière near Chamonix, France in 1939, and a year later two other French hardies, Emile Allais and Etienne Livacic, made it down the north face of the Dôme du Goûter on Mont Blanc. These runs are done by thousands of skiers today, but in the '30s, the days of huge wooden skis, soft leather boots and bear-trap bindings, they were enormously impressive. During World War II, there was a hiatus, and when the sport reappeared it had a vastly different look.

The French climber David Belden wrote in *Climbing* magazine not long ago: "The early forties seem to . . . mark a divorce between skiing and alpinism which lasted until the appearance of what can be termed 'extreme skiing' around 1967, which is certainly the most developed form of ski alpinism." Belden pointed out that this new and vastly improved form was the result of "the reappropriation of the ski by the most advanced alpinists," along with



Carpenter Landry works on John Denver's new house in Aspen

revolutionary technical developments—in both equipment and techniques—in world-class competitive skiing.

"It is impossible," wrote Belden, "to ski down a 55-degree ice slope without the footgrip and precision of foot movement provided by modern ski boots and without skis whose response has been studied and tested in research departments of ski factories. At the same time, it is impossible to ski down the Coufuriel Couloir (a celebrated 2,800-foot, 55-degree pitch in the Alps above Chamonix) without a thorough knowledge of snow conditions at high elevations and a minimum of snow and ice technique and mountain experience."

Most of the sport's historians agree that the first certifiable extreme-ski descent occurred in September 1967, when one Sylvain Saudan stunned those knowledgeable in the field by skiing down the Spencer Couloir on Aiguille de Blaitière in the French Alps. It was a 1,300-foot run down pitches that averaged 51

degrees and fell away at 55 degrees in places. A short, thickly muscled mountain guide and ski instructor, Saudan would rather have been a ski racer, but he was of a poor peasant family in the Swiss canton of Valais, and his parents couldn't afford to send him to races. So he became a master ski mountaineer. Saudan had climbed the Spencer Couloir before he skied it and knew the slope and snow conditions well when he began his descent. Still, he found it so intimidating psychologically that he simply couldn't make himself glide into the first dreaded turns. At last, he tied himself to a rock with a long rope in order to free himself to drop into those initial frightening yards. Once started, he untied himself and finished the run in style. Since that first descent, Saudan has plunged down dozens of extreme runs, including a partial descent of Alaska's Mt. McKinley in 1972 as well as a descent on the 23,410-foot Nuntun peak in the Himalayas.

In the course of so much extreme skiing, Saudan has developed a unique and rather acrobatic turning technique called "the windshield wiper." He plants one of his extra-long poles down the hill, then quickly elevates both skis off the snow in what looks to be a routine jump turn. However, the ski tails remain in the snow while Saudan rotates the ski tips from side to side in a rhythmic pattern, 180 degrees one way, 180 degrees the other, windshield-wiper fashion. Now 44 years old, Saudan has managed to cash in nicely on his courage. He bills himself as "Le Skier de l'Impossible" and makes dozens of public appearances each year, lecturing and showing films of himself in action. In Alpine environs, he is a celebrity of approximately the same luster as a Super Bowl quarterback in the U.S.

Not far behind Saudan in public adulation—perhaps ahead in the daring of his feats—is a lean, tough Frenchman named Patrick Vallénçat, 35. A mountain guide from Chamonix, *continued*

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EXTREME SKIING

continued

Vallençant has made more than 50 descents on slopes of 45 degrees or steeper, beginning in 1971 on the Mont Blanc massif. His most extreme descent occurred in 1979 on the wind-blasted slopes of 21,758-foot Mt. Yerupaja in Peru, on which he broke the 60-degree barrier for his first time, at one point making his way down what he judged to be a 65-degree pitch.

Vallençant has published a book in France titled *Ski Extrême: ma plénitude*, and *Ski* magazine has run excerpts dealing with Vallençant's historic run down Yerupaja. There is a certain purplish melodrama to his report, yet the extremity of the risk he took can scarcely be overstated, particularly when one considers that he did both climb and descent alone.

Vallençant on that daring day: "I am happy. I feel strong, alone on this slope. I become all the heroes of my childhood... The wind makes me crazy, and that also pleases me... The first turn, the

ski tips are in space, below me the slope falls off and at the very bottom are the lakes. They are my goal... At this section, the slope is extremely steep—60 degrees. I find myself before three parallel ice ridges, 10 to 15 centimeters high, separated from each other by two meters. I know that the skis are going to skid, but it is not possible to go around this difficulty and there is no question of turning back. I am trapped... My eyes are riveted on the ice... I hit the last ridge of ice with my weight completely on the uphill ski, the downhill leg hanging uselessly in air, scarcely balancing me. Only a small portion of the edge holds me, just enough to enable me to get back on the snow and regain my balance."

And so it went—down, down, down, down. Perhaps the most telling detail in all the melodramatic description was this: "On the steepest part of the mountain, about 65 degrees, my elbows graze the snow [on the uphill side]"

Another Frenchman, Daniel Chau-

cheffon, reported that when he encountered 65-degree slopes on an ice-covered pitch in the Alps, the worst moment was when the buckles of his ski boots opened in mid-descent, because of dragging against the uphill slope.

So far only a small number of men have made extreme descents, and thus there have been only a few deaths. Heim Holzer, a native of Austria's South Tyrol, had skied down many a couloir in Austria, Italy, France and Switzerland, but he was killed in July 1977 when he fell while trying to descend the north face of Piz Roseg in the Ober-Engadina in Switzerland. Another celebrated extremist, Fritz Stammerger of Aspen, who became a Colorado legend back in the '60s, when he skied down the north face of North Maroon Bell, a 2,500-foot drop over some 50-degree pitches, was killed in 1975 while climbing in Pakistan to attempt a solo descent. And Jean Moran, a French skier, died in Nepal while climbing preparatory to a descent.

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So far, not many Americans have been involved in the sport. Of course, there have long been hell-for-leather individualists in the U.S. capable of throwing themselves down the steep for fun. Since the mid-1930s, brash collegians have climbed the headwall of Tuckerman Ravine on New Hampshire's Mt. Washington in late spring to ski the half-mile, 45-degree slope in corn snow. Perhaps the first serious extreme skiing in the U.S. was a descent 10 years ago of the side of Grand Teton Mountain in Wyoming by Bill Briggs, a climber and ski instructor. He made it down in style despite the fact that he had a fused hip joint. A mountaineer named Steve Shea, who was presumably in perfect shape, tried the same feat in 1978 while ABC Sports cameras recorded his trip. He fell and rolled about 700 feet, but survived to tell the story—though not on television. Briggs did complete the run successfully a year later.

According to Kennedy, 28, who is not only a superb alpinist but also the editor of *Climbing*, Landry is the foremost U.S. disciple of this sparsely practiced sport. "Not that many really good climbers also happen to be really good skiers," says Kennedy. "When you assess it realistically, extreme skiing is harder to do than climbing. If you make a mistake, there's almost nothing you can do to recover. In climbing, you can build up to a tough solo rock climb by practicing a lot in places you can't get hurt. There are degrees of difficulty in climbing, degrees of risk that you can predict and, to some extent, control. With extreme skiing, you take a quantum leap. It's all or nothing. There's no safe middle ground when you're skiing on a 1,000-foot slope over 45 degrees. So there just aren't many people able—or willing—to get into it."

But there is Landry, and he is deep into it. Now 31, he spends his non-skiing time as an itinerant carpenter in Colorado. He has been skiing since he was four. He was a good ski racer, competing in both slalom and downhill for the national junior team as well as for the University of Colorado in the late 1960s. He suffered, among other things, a broken ankle and had to give up serious racing—perhaps before he peaked. Then he turned to what may have been his first love anyway: mountaineering. His first ascents of Fremont Peak and Mt. Sacagawea in Wyoming's Wind River Range

in 1976 were duly noted in the *American Alpine Journal*. In 1977 he made some impressive ice climbs, including an ascent of Bridalveil Falls near Telluride, Colo., and he was on the first winter climb of the 2,000-foot Northwest Butte on Capital Peak near Aspen that year. The combination of Landry's ski-racing talent and his ever-improving mountaineering skills has given him the unique mix required to produce a first-class extreme skier.

Landry is an affable, articulate fellow who is naturally self-effacing. "I'm not among the really hot climbers and I was never a really hot racer," he says, "but the combination of the two is enough to give me confidence to do some fairly tough descents."

After his historic trip down Pyramid Peak in the spring of '78, Landry was confident enough to tackle North America's tallest mountain, 20,320-foot Mt. McKinley. In May 1979, he climbed up to 19,500 feet, hoping that conditions would allow him to ski down. There was no chance; the surface was boiler-plate ice. He tried a short run, found it too risky, removed his skis and ski boots and climbed down with his Alpine gear. Landry plans to try again this spring. He has charted a descent from the summit down the mountain's West Rib, an elegantly contoured ridge that plunges 9,000 feet to the 11,000-foot level. If he is successful, it will be the first time the Rib will have been skied. Saudan's run on McKinley in 1972 was down the Messner Couloir, a suitably hair-raising route with some 50-degree slopes, but it covers only about half the distance that Landry expects to ski.

Landry's most satisfying extreme descent occurred last May on Mt. Rainier in Washington. He describes it as "a classic." His companion was Doug Robinson, 35, of Bishop, Calif., a superb climber and excellent skier—though he specializes in cross-country skiing and ski mountaineering rather than Alpine skiing. Robinson makes his living as a mountain guide and as a photographer and writer. He and Landry met only a short time before they left for Rainier, and as Robinson recalls, "We were on the mountain a good 10 days before Chris could ply his art, and, frankly, I was nervous the whole time. At first I watched him closely—and with a definitely mor-

bod fascination. I was very curious and very worried. I really didn't know him, and I kept wondering, 'Is he suicidal? Does he have a death wish? What's on his mind? Is he crazy?' I really didn't want to stand by and watch this man die. As the days went by, Chris was becoming a good friend, and then I really didn't want to watch him die. The nervousness kept building."

Robinson was also going to ski on Rainier—a 5,000-foot section of the Emmons Glacier, most of it pitched at an angle of about 35 degrees. Easy going, right? Wrong. Robinson was going to do it on Nordic skis with three-pin bindings, his bootsoles free. His skis were skinny, but they weren't the limber, edge-less slats that Sunday trekkers take out into the woods. They were stiff fiber-glass Rossignol Randonnées, equipped with stout steel edges. He needed them, for the snow surface on Rainier is under constant attack by high winds. Some of it is hammered into a base that Robinson calls windboard, a surface so hard and slick and steep that a man can't stand without crampons to hold him in place. In other places the surface becomes "sastrugi," which Robinson describes as "random stacks of sharp-edged platters strewn across the snow. Skiing it is roughly like trying to hold an edge while traversing a steep slate roof—only here some of the slates are six or eight inches thick."

Emmons is a huge glacier, a mile wide in places and reaching from Rainier's 14,410-foot summit all the way to the Washington rain forest, 10,000 feet below. At the top, Robinson found himself skiing on a surface of rippled ice with "the texture of a frozen Gila monster hide." Even though his run wasn't truly extreme skiing, because of the lesser angle, Robinson had a terrifying close call. After skiing off the top, he caught an edge on sastrugi snow, fell and began to slide. Landry, on skis and carrying a camera, helplessly watched him slip by, so stunned by the mishap that he forgot to take a picture. First sliding ever faster, then beginning to bounce, Robinson fought for 300 feet to arrest his fall, working desperately to bring his ski edges under him again and dragging his ski-pole tips on the rough surface. At last, his poles slowed him and he came to a stop. Landry had followed him down. Then while Robinson sat trembling on the slope, Landry examined *continued*



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Confused about time differences?

Use these samples as your benchmark. Here's how it works: with your time zone as your guide, check your watch and add the number of hours shown below. For example, 4 p.m. in the Eastern Time Zone is 10 p.m. in Germany.

Time Difference from U.S. Mainland to	U.S. Time Zones*			
	EST	CST	MST	PST
France	6	7	8	9
Germany	6	7	8	9
Greece	7	8	9	10
Hong Kong	13	14	15	16
Israel	7	8	9	10
Japan	14	15	16	17
New Zealand	18	19	20	21
South Africa	7	8	9	10
Sweden	6	7	8	9
United Kingdom	5	6	7	8
Venezuela	1	2	3	4

*Based on Standard Time

Clip this page

It's a good idea to clip this chart so you'll have all the information handy when you need it.

FROM THE U.S. MAINLAND TO	INITIAL 3-MINUTE DIAL RATES		FROM THE U.S. MAINLAND TO	INITIAL 3-MINUTE DIAL RATES	
	DAY RATE	LOWER RATE PERIODS		DAY RATE	LOWER RATE PERIODS
American Samoa	\$6.15	\$4.95 Sunday only	Libya	\$7.65	—
Andorra	6.15	—	Liechtenstein	6.15	—
Argentina	6.90	5.55 Sunday only	Luxembourg	6.15	4.95 5pm-Sat & Sun
Australia	7.65	5.70 Sunday only	Malaysia	7.65	—
Austria	6.15	—	Monaco	6.15	—
Bahrain	7.65	—	Netherlands	6.15	4.95 5pm-Sat & Sun
Belgium	6.15	4.95 5pm-Sat & Sun	Netherlands Antilles	6.00	4.80 6pm-Sat & Sun
Belize	5.55†	—	New Caledonia	7.65	—
Bolivia	6.90	5.55 Sunday only	New Zealand	6.90	—
Brazil	7.65	5.70 8pm-Sat & Sun	Nicaragua	5.55†	4.20 6pm-Sat & Sun
Chile	6.90	5.55 8pm-Sat & Sun	Nigeria	7.65	—
Colombia	6.90†	5.55 Sunday only	Norway	6.15	4.95 5pm-Sat & Sun
Costa Rica	5.55†	4.20 6pm-Sat & Sun	Panama	4.65†	3.60 5pm-7am-Sat-Sun
Cyprus	6.90	5.55 Sunday only	Papua New Guinea	7.65	—
Denmark	6.15	4.95 5pm-Sat & Sun	Paraguay	6.90	5.55 Sunday only
Ecuador	6.90†	5.55 6pm-Sat & Sun	Peru	6.90	5.55 8pm-Sat & Sun
El Salvador	5.55†	4.20 6pm-Sat & Sun	Philippines	7.65	5.70 Sunday only
Finland	6.90	—	Portugal	6.15	4.95 5pm-Sat & Sun
France	6.15	—	Romania	6.90	—
French Antilles	6.00†	—	San Marino	6.15	4.95 5pm-Sat & Sun
German Dem. Rep. (East Germany)	6.15	4.95 5pm-Sat only	Saudi Arabia	7.65	—
German Fed. Rep. (West Germany)	6.15	4.95 5pm-Sat only	Senegal	6.90	—
Greece	6.15	—	Singapore	7.65	—
Guam	6.90	5.55 Sat & Sun Only	South Africa	7.65	—
Guatemala	5.55†	4.20 6pm-Sat & Sun	Spain	6.15	4.95 5pm-Sat & Sun
Guyana	6.90†	—	Sri Lanka	7.65	—
Haiti	6.90†	5.55 6pm-Sat & Sun	Suriname	6.90†	5.55 Sunday only
Honduras	5.55†	4.20 6pm-Sat & Sun	Sweden	6.15	4.95 5pm-Sat & Sun
Hong Kong	6.90	—	Switzerland	6.15	—
Indonesia	7.65	—	Tahiti	7.65	—
Iran	7.65	—	Taiwan	7.65	5.70 Sunday only
Iraq	7.65	—	Thailand	7.65	—
Ireland	4.65	3.60 5pm-Sat & Sun	Tunisia	7.65	—
Israel	7.65	5.70 Sat & Sun only	Turkey	6.90	5.55 Sunday only
Italy	6.15	4.95 5pm-Sat & Sun	United Arab Emirates	7.65	—
Ivory Coast	6.90	—	United Kingdom	4.65	3.60 5pm-Sat & Sun
Japan	7.65	5.70 Sunday only	U.S.S.R.	6.90	5.55 Sunday only
Kenya	6.90	—	Valencia City	6.15	4.95 5pm-Sat & Sun
Korea, Rep. of	7.65	—	Venezuela	6.90†	5.55 6pm-Sat & Sun
Kuwait	6.90	—	Yugoslavia	6.90	5.55 Sunday only
Libania	6.90	5.55 Sunday only			

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†Rates are even lower from some areas.

EXTREME SKIING

continued

Robinson's ski edges. They had been honed too sharp. Landry took a piece of emery cloth from his pocket and rubbed Robinson's edges to dull them. They skied the rest of the glacier without a problem.

Two days later, following heavy snowstorms, Landry and Robinson began at 1:30 a.m. to climb the mile-long section of Rainier known as Liberty Ridge, the site of Chris' next descent. As a climb, Liberty Ridge is considered one of the 50 classic ascents in North America. Normally, it is a two-day climb; Robinson and Landry were going to climb and descend in a day. The ascent—much of it by head lamp—took seven hours and the conditions were beautiful. At the top, the snow surface was steel-hard but very smooth windboard. The wind was, as always, blowing hard, but the morning was clear.

Later Robinson wrote: "I am backing down . . . Mt. Rainier on the toe points of my crampons, alone and unroped. This is the steepest section, 600 feet below the summit, where the angle is 50-degrees-plus. As I sink my ice ax into the wind-packed crust, I can see 5,000 feet between my legs to the Carbon Glacier below. A faint hiss brings my attention up to powder snow sliding over the horizon of ice above. Backlit golden, the snow rolls over the toes of my climbing boots . . . leaving a taste of vertigo in my mouth. Now the powder is coming in rhythmic waves. . . . Soon I can see a figure behind them, pumping turns as he comes into view, skis flashing in the air between the edge sets. . . ."

No longer was there any doubt in Robinson's mind about Landry's sanity or skill in skiing extreme slopes. "I can see from these first turns that he is way inside his limits. He can do anything he wants. He is in perfect control."

Landry himself, reflecting on this historic first ski descent of Liberty Ridge, says, "It was mellow. Sure, it was serious; there were plenty of opportunities to blow it. But the fear factor was very low. There was no anxiety about unknowns, and it was what skiing should be—it was fun."

Three weeks after Rainier, Landry and Robinson were together again, this time in the Sierra Nevada, climbing a desperately steep ribbon of terrain known as the Mendel Couloir. It is suffocatingly narrow, breathtakingly steep—

up to 63 degrees—and 1,100 feet long.

Although Landry had viewed the descent as a training experience, it proved to be the steepest and the most frightening he had ever skied. One severe problem was the snow—sugary stuff that lay rather thinly over a surface that was partly black ice and partly bedrock. Was it even skiable? Landry recalls, "Yes, it was—but barely. If I could maintain a steady perception of what I was doing, hold an intense concentration, I felt I wouldn't get into trouble. I might not enjoy the run, but I was almost positive that I would survive."

The first serious trouble he encountered was putting on his skis. He had climbed the narrow neck toward the summit, but there wasn't enough snow to get to the very top—a fact that spoiled the "esthetic effect" of the descent before it began. Landry had to remove his climbing boots and crampons, but there was no way to perch on the snow and ice without crampons. He slammed the point of his ice ax deep into the ice, attached the sling on the handle to his belt, and gingerly removed his climbing boots and crampons and put on his ski boots and skis. Then he carefully tested his weight on the snow. It held. "I removed the ice ax," he says, "and it was literally anchors awigh."

It was also close to a nightmare. The drop was so steep and the trough so narrow that for the first section he had to sidestep down. He attempted a turn, what he called "a little test flight, a short hop downhill," and landed on a rock that was protruding through the black ice. He tried another turn, hit another rock. "All I could do was down-climb the gully," he says. "That wasn't what I had in mind." Once he had moved down past the worst-looking snow, he began some very cautious turns.

Later, Landry wrote: "Terrain that steep imposes a much smaller latitude in body position and every aspect of the turn must be in control. It begins with a slow release of edge control . . . into a slow sideslip . . . all the weight on the downhill ski. The steeper the skiing the smaller the effective range in the angle of incidence of the ski edge to the snow. The correct position is between leaning too far into the hill where the edge washes out and loses contact, and leaning too far out, simply falling headfirst down the gul-

ly. For all its appearance of wild abandon—bopping up off the snow perhaps two feet into the air, swinging the skis into and across the fall line while still in the air and then blasting back down into the snow in a low, angulated position—such turns amount to a carefully controlled relinquishing and regaining of edge control. A serious mistake will probably result in an immediate, permanent loss of control. . . ."

Thus Landry cold-sweated his way down the couloir and, about one hour later, reached the bottom—alive and skiing. Robinson, who had watched him the whole precarious way, says, "Chris was pushed hard. It just happens that Mendel is one of the classic tough ice climbs in the Sierras, and when experienced climbers hear that someone skied down Mendel, they're amazed. I saw him hesitate, I saw his concern. He didn't say much about it afterward, but I knew from his silence that it had been tough."

Nevertheless, Landry may be extreme skiing for years to come. "I don't expect I'll ever really peak," he says. "There will always be something I haven't done, something I'll want to try."

But why persist in taking such risks?

Landry has an answer of sorts: "I'm very selfish. I do these things for the sake of the doing. People tend to fall into a lot of Zen lingo over that kind of remark. I don't know doodly about Buddhism. These experiences have an integrity of their own. In the long run, I guess I don't want to know too much about the drive that makes me do what I do in the mountains. All I can say is that this desire to do extreme skiing seems to be something natural for me, something evolutionary in myself."

"Too often people—especially the press—deal with extreme sport, so-called, as if it has some intrinsic significance beyond the act itself. They try to find value to mankind in the fact that a guy sticks his neck on the line. I'd be the last to say that what I'm doing has any importance to anyone but myself. People talk about 'conquering' a mountain or 'beating' a steep slope. That's exactly wrong. It's not conflict, it's not aggression or warfare. To do these things, you have to force yourself into a kind of passive state where you blend in as part of the mountain, part of the snow, part of the skis, part of the environment. It is totally symbiotic."

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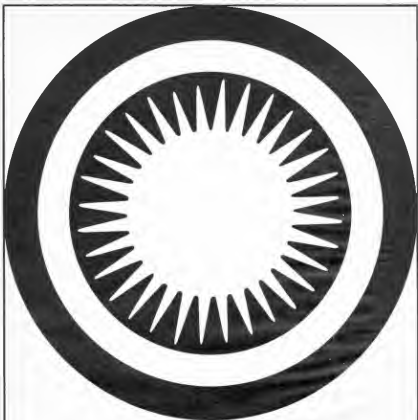
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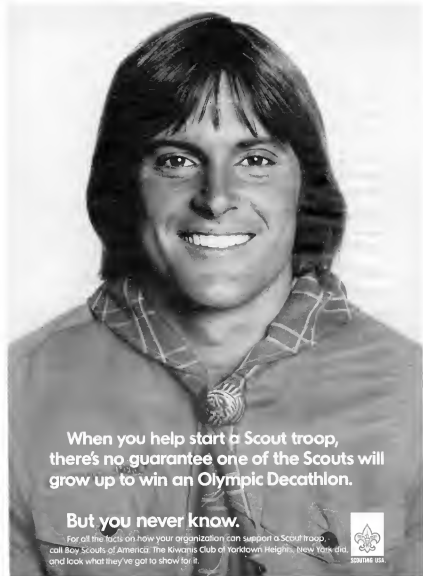
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SCOUTING USA.

FOR THE RECORD

A roundup of the week March 10-22

Compiled by N BROOKS CLARK

COLLEGE BASKETBALL—FLORIDA SOUTHERN defeated Miami 51. Mary's of Maryland 73-61 in Springfield, Mass. to win the NCAA Division III title.

POTSDAM (N.Y.) STATE was the NCAA Division III championship winner, 61-43, over the University of Augsburg College of Illinois in Rock Island, Ill.

WESTARK COMMUNITY COLLEGE of Fort Smith, Ark. beat Lincoln (Ill.) College 87-59 in Hutchinson, Kan., to win the national junior-college title.

LOUISIANA (N.C.) COLLEGE was the women's national junior-college title by defeating Morehead (Mo.) Junior College 65-61 at Overland Park, Kan.

PRO BASKETBALL—Walt Brown and Philadelphia, N.J., 1 and 1A in the Atlantic Division, were crowned as the team with the best record in the NBA. It was New York that was playing like a champion. Showing 1991 from the field, the Knicks upset the 76ers 129-109 and then staged their best defensive effort of the season in beating Houston 114-89. Three more triumphs followed, raising New York's victory streak to six, and the Red Bull Richardson was the standout to all three in a 119-111 triumph over Central Division champion Milwaukee (June 40). Richardson scored 28 points, as he did in his 26 in a 101-107 win, and in a 119-109 victory over Cleveland he had 27 points, 19 assists and 15 rebounds. The Nets won their last of their early season in New York in a homecoming one, 126-120 in overtime at New Jersey, the Nets getting 28 points from Mike Newlin (June 20). Boston, with triumphs over New Jersey (113-121) and Washington (112-101) and 128-114 and a loss to Atlanta (108-97), was half a game ahead of Philadelphia at week's end. In the Western Conference, Golden State was still fighting for a postseason berth. The Warriors lost 114-112 in overtime to Midwest Division champion San Antonio on Spar Paul Griffin's two darts, with a second loss in OT. After being 110-117 on Boston's second half, the Warriors had four seconds remaining, Golden State in San Diego 119-113 and defeated Phoenix 114-105. Tim Dente led the team's image around for clinching the Pacific Division title two.

BOWLING—MARSHALL BLOOM defeated Wayne State 301-141 to win a \$100,000 PBA tournament in Overland Park, Kan.

BOXING—SALVADOR SANCHEZ retained by WBC featherweight title with a tenth-round TKO of Roberto Castanon in Las Vegas.

FENCING—THE UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA won the NCAA title, defeating defending champion Wayne State 113-111 in Kansas, Wis. PAUL FRIDBERG of Penn State led the individual sword competition, while GIL PLEZZA and ERNEST SIMON of Wayne State won the epee and foil titles, respectively.

GOLF—DEANNA CAPONI defeated Phil Bradley by three strokes to win a \$200,000 LPGA tournament in Las Vegas. She shot a three-under-par 216.

HOCKEY—After losing 6-2 to Boston, which got two goals by Rick Middleton (June 42), Hartford defeated Montreal 5-3, tying the highest total goal allowed by the Canadiens over the last 11 seasons. Three nights later, Montreal lost Dave (Tiger) Williams of Vancouver knew that he shouldn't have said what he said—as an anti-Franco-Canadian slur—defeating the Canadian Canadian game on Dec. 17. On the first shift of their rematch, Williams high-checked Montreal's Chris Nilan, who gave Williams the ball out of his back in Montreal. After Greg Lemard and Mark Tremblay, as multiracially charged Williams, who then high-checked Canadiens' goaltender Richard Sevigny. Thirty-eight penalty minutes were fighting ensued. On his way to the penalty box after a slashing match in the second period, Williams got involved in another brawl when he and Tremblay were in the circle. He skated there 18 minutes in penalties handed out in the game, and Montreal won 5-3. In the second period of Buffalo's 14-4 victory over Toronto, the Sabres scored nine goals, as set in NHL single-game record. Wayne Gretzky had four assists in Edmonton's 3-1 defeat of Minnesota, the final goal in a 1-1 deadlock with the fourth game and one goal and four assists in a 4-4 draw with Los Angeles to bring his point total to 143. That left him just seven short of the NHL record set in 1976-77 by Phil Esposito, with seven goals left to

play. Mike Bossy of the Islanders was also chasing an Esposito record, 78 goals in a season. With eight games remaining, his total stood at 43. With a 6-2 loss to Toronto and a 3-2 tie with Washington, first-place St. Louis' margin over the Islanders—now at least six seven points—had shrunk to three.

HORSE RACING—SUN CATCHER 153-40, Alonso Gutierrez up defeated Prince Maurice by a length to win the \$168,039 New Orleans Handicap at Fair Grounds. The 4-year-old colt ran the 1 1/4 miles in 1:42.15.

NELL'S BRIGUETTE (June 20), ridden by Bill Shoemaker, beat Bee A Scout by three-quarters of a length to win the \$111,806 Santa Susana Stakes at Santa Anita. The 3-year-old filly covered the 1 1/4 miles in 1:42.15.

MOTOR SPORTS—The team of HURLEY HAYWOOD, BRUCE LUTEN and AL HILL won the 1000-mile triathlon over the 5 1/2-mile course, won the 12 hours of Sebring (Fla.) endurance race in a Porsche Turbo.

SWIMMING—TEXAS won the AAJW championship in Columbus, S.C., defeating Stanford 587 3 to 545 5 on the strength of five firsts by the Longhorns: 100 Sprint—22:48 in the 50-yard free and 53:10 in the 100-yard butterfly, were good for American records. STANFORD set U.S. women's marks in the 200- and 400-yard freestyle relays, with times of 1:31:12 and 3:19:18, respectively, and NORTH CAROLINA swam the 200-yard medley relay in a record 1:42:43.

TENNIS—JIMMY CONNORS defeated Gene Mayer 6-1, 2-6, 6-2 to win a \$175,000 tournament in Rotterdam.

CHRIS EVERT LLOYD beat Mimi Inoue 6-4, 6-4 to win a \$150,000 tournament in Boston.

TRACK & FIELD—WILLIE BANKS set an American triple jump record of 56' 7 1/2" in Los Angeles, surpassing the mark of 56' 4 1/2" set by James Bunn in 1978.

MILEPOSTS—CLEARED by a jump in Minnesota County (Ariz.) Superior Court, former Arizona State Football Coach FRANK KISH, 32, of charges of battery, sexual harassment and misrepresentation of a scholarship situation to former San Diego player Kevin Rader.

NAMED As coach of the New Jersey Nets, effective at the end of this season, LARRY BRUNN, 40, who guided UCLA to a 41-17 record over the last two seasons, to replace Bob MacKinnon, who has become of betterly aggressive and misrepresentation of a scholarship situation to former San Diego player Kevin Rader.

RETIRED As of the end of this season, Center WES UNSELD, 35, after leading the Baltimore, Capital and Washington Bullets to the playoffs in 12 of his 13 seasons with the team and to the NBA championship in 1977-78. Unseled, who was the league's MVP and Rookie of the Year in 1968-69, has been offered a vice-presidency of the Bullets and Capital Centre.

SIGNED To a two-year, \$2.9 million contract with the Chicago White Sox, Coach CARLTON FISKE, 31, who coached 284 over 11 seasons with Boston.

DIED PAUL D. (Duffy) DEAN, 47, art teacher for the St. Louis Cardinals from 1954 to 1979 and brother of Joe Dunn (Duffy) Dean, of a heart attack in Springfield, Ark. He pushed a no-hitter and two World Series victories in his rookie year. His lifetime record was 30-34 with a 3.75 ERA.

JAMES F. (Jackie) KILBOTT, 61, the track coach at Villanova University since 1955, of a heart attack, in June Beach, Pa.

IRVING JAFFEE, 74, who won the 13,000-meter speed skating title at the 1952 Olympics in St. Moritz and the 5,000 and 10,000 at the 1952 Winter Games in Lake Placid, at cancer, in La Jolla, Calif.

FRANK C. (Timothy) LANE, 83, baseball's man in motion who, between 1923 and 1979, was business manager, animal manager in scout for 11 major league teams, after a long career in the Cardinals. Lane was estimated that during his career he worked out more than 300 deals involving more than 700 players.

CREDITS

4—Milton Letts; 14—Andy Malt; 17—Marty Miller; 18—Richard Manning; 19—Terry Loran; 20—Tony Loran; 21—Steve Loran; 22—Steve Loran; 23—Vladimir Loran; 24—Paul Kennedy; 25—Larry Loran; 26—Lara Loran; 27—Lara Loran; 28—Paul Kennedy; 29—Tony Loran; 30—Vladimir Loran; 31—George Loran; 32—Larry Loran; 33—Doug Robinson; 34—Michael Kennedy; 35—Doug Robinson; 36—Gerry Stander; 37—Ben Perry; 38—Manual Dole.

FACES IN THE CROWD



BRENDA BUGLIOSI
VIRGINIA, N.Y.

Bugliosi, 19, was three of the six sixteen races and placed fourth overall in the four stage stations to win the combined-event title of the 10-race North American Ski Trophy Series at five sites in Vermont, New Hampshire and Quebec.



JOE GIBBS
AMELI, IOWA

Joe, a 132-pound senior at Ames High, ended his varsity wrestling career with a 104-5 record and his fourth state 3A title, making him the first to win it with that many. His brother Jim won the NCAA 139-pound title for Iowa State.



TYNE PEACOCK
CHAMPAIGN, ILL.

Peacock, a 6' 1" sophomore at Modesto (Calif.) Junior College, surpassed his own national J.C. record of 7' 3 1/2" in the high jump by clearing 7' 6" in his first meet this season. With 1,466 points, he is also Modesto's leading career basketball scorer.



PEGGY CLAREN
BOZEMAN, MONT.

Peggy, 11, a speed skater, won all four girls' medals events at the National Outdoor Championships in West Ada, Wis. She set personal midget records in the 200 meters (21:52), the 300 (1:30.64), the 400 (1:38.65) and the 500 (1:50.43).



BILL MINTURN
PARADISE VALLEY, ARIZ.

Minturn, 55, a sergeant, won his age group (35-39) in two marathons in a five-week period. After clocking a 3:14:20 in the Tucson Marathon on Jan. 25, he ran the Phoenix in 3:16:00 on March 1, his third marathon in less than four years.



BARBARA MALTBY
PACIFIC PALMS, CALIF.

Maltby, 32, a touring pro with Clark's Open Racquet Club, beat Alicia McCoskey of Booklyn 15-11, 15-5, 8-15, 15-13 at the U.S. Women's National Squash Championships in Los Angeles to win her second consecutive title.

GIVING BOXING A JOLT

Sir:

I'm glad you're finally telling your readers what two-bit, money-grubbing, unprofessional clowns the WBC and WBA really are (Special Report: Time to Clean Up Boxing Again, March 16 et seq.). But showing how these organizations work isn't automatically going to improve boxing. That won't happen until a completely new system of administering boxing replaces the current one. It should require boxers to systematically fight their way to the top and, when they reach the pinnacle, to box the fighters directly behind them. Then we would no longer have to witness mismatches in championship bouts, and deserving fighters would no longer have to watch from the ringside seats, à la Thomas Hearns.

If other pro sports operated the way boxing does, the Phillies, for example, might sit out the 1981 baseball season until the World Series rolls around and then, after, say, the Yankees or Royals win the right to contend for the championship, decide to play the Detroit Tigers instead.

J.D. LANCASTER
Clinton, Mich.

Sir:

The old boxing saying "Kill the body and the head will die" doesn't hold true in this case. It seems the "head" is dead already.

VINCENT J. CALGER
Coeville, N.Y.

Sir:

Time to clean up boxing again? When, pray tell, was it cleaned up before? Not in my lifetime, and I'm 73.

ED GARMAN
Akron

Sir:

Pat Putnam's story on the WBC and WBA was dyn-o-mite. Keep up the fight, and maybe we'll have a sport that's truly boxing.

FRANK E. VESCO SR.
Cortland, N.Y.

TALKING IT UP

Sir:

Your piece on baseball chatter (Chatter, March 16) fascinated me. Times have changed on the sandlots, too. A couple of seasons ago, during one of the pickup softball games I played in on Sunday mornings, one of the fielders yelled, "Let's hear some chatter from the infield!"

"Great," someone else replied. "Pick a topic."

Sic transit...

MIKE LEIDERMAN
Co-host, PM Magazine/Chicago
Chicago

Sir:

Chatter is why I am now able to speak before large groups. Where else could a 9-year-old get training in talking to crowds of friends and foes but near second base, standing with hands on knees? Thanks for the memories. They made turning 30 last week a lot easier.

JOHN B. FREISCHNER
Director of Recreation and Parks
Ashland, Ky.

Sir:

Wrong! "Hum Babe" does not mean to hum the fastball. Rather, it's merely today's version of a classic expression that is going through an evolutionary cycle—"Hum Babe" from "Hom Babe" from "Huum Babe" from "Maun Babe" from "C'mson Babe" from "C'mon Babe" from "C'mon Babe" from "Come on, Baby."

Thus, "Come on, Baby" has evolved into "Hum Babe," and probably it will eventually work out to "Hoo Bay."

MASON FORD
Klinckon, N.J.

Sir:

"Hum Babe" is a contraction of the words "Come on, Babe," and it eventually gets to just "Babe."

The chatter for telling the pitcher to throw the baseball fast is "Fire it by him, Babe," which becomes "Fah Babe."

BOB GARLINGTON
Houston

CHOOSING FACES

Sir:

Your SCORECARD discussion of "Faces that emerge from the crowd" (March 16) simply doesn't ring true. There's a difference between a child's accomplishments in competition against his peers and his accomplishments when competing against some absolute standard. Nancy Lopez mastering a golf course at the age of 12, or an 11-year-old bowling a perfect game, or a 14-year-old getting a remarkable time in distance running or swimming is noteworthy. True, even those achievements may be the result of some unnecessary adult pressure, but they are achievements nonetheless. Twelve-goal games and 83-goal seasons, on the other hand, are at least to some extent a measure of the quality of the competition against which the records were achieved.

I'm happy to read that 6-year-old soccer player Mimi Garrett is learning sportsmanship along with his goal-scoring, but that doesn't justify his appearance in FACES in the Crowd. If you want to protect the egos of the young winners who appear in FACES and

the young losers who put them there, don't publicize them at all. If the winners are so good as they seem, their time for public recognition will come.

MARK F. KOEHLER
West Hartford, Conn.

DEATH OF AN ATHLETE (CONT.)

Sir:

Speaking from the perspective of disabled persons, we were deeply touched by the tragic story of Kenny Wright (Kenny, Dying Young, March 9). We are student-athletes attending Southwest State University in Marshall, Minn., and members of the school's wheelchair basketball team. The majority of us, upon deciding to further our education at the college level, were relatively unaware of athletic programs available to disabled individuals. But now at SSU we have been exposed to the opportunity to compete in sports such as basketball, softball, football, swimming, archery, track and field and others. On Feb. 27 we hosted the Fifth National Intercollegiate Wheelchair Basketball Tournament, and we can now proudly boast of being the 1981 national champions.

This letter should not be viewed as a cheap plug for SSU but as a very sincere plug for life. It saddens us to think of all the Kenny Wrights who have been misled into believing they can no longer function athletically and socially after they have become disabled. It also saddens us to see SPORTS ILLUSTRATED reinforce these absurd societal beliefs.

THE BRONCOS BASKETBALL TEAM
Southwest State University
Marshall, Minn.

Sir:

Frank Deford used the gradual disposal of Kenny Wright's scuba-diving equipment to symbolize his final acknowledgment of life's pleasures lost. Ironically, people with the same injury level as Kenny are scuba diving today. One swimmer I know of, who is also a C-7 quadriplegic, brought himself out of devastating depression through competitive swimming. He needs no flotation device and receives great satisfaction from the sweet and hard drive required for national competition. Those who have suffered from spinal-cord injuries don't need to sit back and worry about what they can't do. There are plenty of challenges for them.

FAMELA CARLSON
Physical Therapist
Glen Ellyn, Ill.

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